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THE

TRIAL:

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF

CHARLES HORTON, Esq.

By a GENTLEMAN.

K

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



DUBLIN:

Printed for H. SAUNDERS, W. SLEATER, J. POTTS,
J. WILLIAMS, T. WALKER, R. MONCRIEFFE,
and C. JENKINS. M DCC LXXII.

THE
 TRIAL:
 OR, THE
 HISTORY



CHARLES ON THE

By a GENTLEMAN

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

DUBLIN.

Printed for H. Saunders, W. Stanger, J. Potter,
 J. Williams, T. Warren, R. McKinnon,
 and C. Jenkins. MDCCLXXII.

and date of the year on the back.—The Roman
 General was ever proud of a triumphal arch,
 than I was at seeing the effect of this exploit re-
 maining undisturbed.—An hillock in a neighbour-
 hood of I recall with great satisfaction
 in the town, and the many medals
 which I to enumerate the many medals
 pleasures I enjoy here, you would be well fitted
 at the revival of them.—You will laugh at
 little to think that I should be so little, but
 you have more were in to me
 one of these revivals.—You have often told

heav'd I never thought as all.—If you were here
 I should converse with you, and I should be
 The wild, half-civilized Charles Horton has not
 To EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq.
 whether you would know me, if you were to

✠ I AM returned to the place of my nati-
 ✠ I vity, my dear friend. Happy in the em-
 ✠ braces of my venerable parent, I taste
 and enjoy almost perfect bliss;—but that shall not
 make me forget my friend.

I believe it was the policy of my father to
 keep me as long as he possibly could from this
 place, which was ever dear to me, and is now
 rendered more so by the recollection of pleasures
 I enjoyed in the beginning of my life, when my
 spirits, light, innocent, and free, gave me a re-
 semblance of the birds that flew around me.—
 The pleasantness of the season, now in its prime,
 adds to my enjoyment.—Not a spot I see, but re-
 minds me of some particular boyish frolic; and
 the remembrance is most grateful to me.—I have

THE TRIAL.

visited, with great ceremony, a tall straight ash, that I once climbed to get at a magpie's nest.—In memory of the transaction, I cut the month and date of the year on the bark.—No Roman general was ever prouder of a triumphal arch, than I was at seeing the record of this exploit remaining undefaced.—An hillock in a neighbouring field I revisit with great satisfaction, where a little greyhound I formerly had killed me an hare.—In short, were I to enumerate the many mental pleasures I enjoy here, you would be heartily tired at the recital of them.—You will laugh not a little, to think that I amuse myself thus; but you would laugh more, were you to see me in one of these reveries.—You have often told me, in some of my flighty fits, that you believed I never thought at all.—If you were here, I should convince you that I do nothing else.—The wild, hair-brained Charles Horton has undergone a strange metamorphosis.—I question whether you would know me, if you were to meet me; and I am sure, when you compare this epistle with most of the others you have hitherto received from me, you will confess, that I am wond'rously altered. On a review, I find this is more legible than one half, or rather nine tenths of all the letters I ever wrote.—If I continue to amend in this manner, I shall take up the trade of a scrivener very soon. I live soberly, go to bed regularly, rise early, and, wonderful to relate, can sit down and play patiently a pool of quadrille for three-pence a fish.—This place will bury all my fame; I shall be forgotten.—But as you have been acquainted with the constitution of the principal part of our family, you will be surprized at our having constant company here, and, no doubt, will be curious to

find

find out the party ; but that I shall not reveal to you now.—I expect that your answer to this will be full of congratulations on my amendment and reformation, as I am sure you will stile it, and applaud yourself for setting me so grave, so pious, and so steady an example.—No, I forbid all that.—However, write to me, and let me know that you received this.—I desire you may answer all my letters ; for I suppose, in your sententious epistles, I shall have sufficient food for contemplation to digest in my most retired hours.—I don't care how grave you are ; dull you cannot be.—Rub your eyes, and assure yourself you are awake ; especially when I confess myself thine,

Most sincerely,

CHARLES HORTON.

A 3

LET.

LETTER II.

TO CHARLES HORTON, Esq.

MAN, say the philosophers, is a microcosm. As many changes and revolutions, and equally as important, may happen in the small as in the great world. We know not in this globe invariableness or stability; how then can we expect it in the lesser machine, that, from its construction, is more liable to mutability, and less capable of steadiness and certainty? We are sensible, from experience, that a watch the size of a three-penny piece will not go so truly and exactly as one of Graham's old-fashioned watches, half as big as a warming-pan.—When we see every thing involved in irregularity, all things in a state of fluctuation, why should your change be surprizing? It is not really so. It may, perhaps, be wonderful, to a man that does not always consider matters thoroughly. Such an extraordinary transformation as that you give me an account of, allowing it all to be true, (you see I am a sceptic) would make him think there was some very mysterious cause for it. I can explain it all. Your versatility of nature; the happy flexibility with which you can accustom and fit yourself to every state in life; your carelessness, and hatred of trouble, all conspire, and make you one of the happiest men in the world.—In London, since I have known you, you have been immersed in a sea of fashionable follies; too indolent to be the leader, and too ambitious and fond of your fame, as you call it, to be at the tail of them. You have been hurried along in the middle of that crowd of fools,
 who

who fill our streets, and disgrace our country. 'Tis true, you have been less conspicuous; but you have been more happy, and more at leisure to pursue those plans which you trace out (and I will do you the justice to say, very religiously adhere to) than those who are at the head of the mode, and are at once the objects of public admiration and envy. Left you should be at a loss to know what I allude to, I mean your *penchant* for amours, intrigues, &c. and all other modes of dissipation. You are now in the country. Dear variety pleases you: a new toy will stop the crying of any child. Your complaints of the eternal, immutable round of amusements that destroyed you here, are changed into praises of the country. How long will this last?—Till you grow tired of Edwood.—Now you may imagine that I naturally suppose, that you will plunge as deep into the country sports as you did into the gentler diversions of the city.—No such thing.—I promise for you there will be no account in the news-papers of your having broke your neck in riding a race; nor will your stable doors be as remarkable in history as Sir Roger de Coverley's, or adorned like his with spoils of badgers, stags, and foxes.—I do not doubt but you will ride for your exercise, in order to give a glow of health to your countenance, that may serve to endear you more to your fair connections on your return to town. May I put your regularity of life to the same score, or to the authority and example of a virtuous father?—You are sensible, that I have known precept fail with you. I am not astonished at this change I find in you; but I shall be much more astonished, if I find you continue to write to me. My answers may not always be pleasing to you. I have almost exceeded

the limits of my paper.—But I thought I was in conversation with you, and knew not when to stop.—For although I tell you truth, I am not the less your sincere friend,

EDWARD SIMPSON.

LETTER III.

TO EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq.

I AM determined to astonish you, dear Simpson; for I shall continue to write to you. I am determined also to acquaint you with every thing that happens to me. Write to me as you will, your letters must always please me. I know your good intentions, and am no stranger to the virtues of your heart, or the justness and purity of your sentiments. I am acquainted with your desire of serving me, and am sure that I shall receive your advice on every important occasion. Do you think then, this being premised, that I care in what stile you address me, or in what garb you cloath your sentiments and instructions, however uncouth? Shall I despise the diamond, because it is rough? The asperities of its sides or surface may be disagreeable to me when I touch it, but they will not diminish its value with me. There are some animals, asses for instance, that delight in feeding on thistles, and the most prickly shrubs they can get at; there is a roughness in them that pleases their palates. From among the thorns and brambles of well-meant satire, that may be scattered in your letters, will I pluck the
rose

rose of instruction. The blossom of the thorny furze yields honey to the bee, as well as the silken hyacinth. While I am soliciting your correspondence, I am only earning reproof for myself.— You think I have deserved it. I will not affirm that I have been always blameless. At some hour or other I will let you into those parts of my history, which caused some of my behaviour to appear so very mysterious and absurd to you. You will, perhaps, then accuse and reprehend me the more; but I will kiss the rod. You must allow me to say, that you may not be always right in your conjectures: the change of the scene may have given me a transient pleasure; but it is not that only will suffice me. A new train of thoughts takes possession of me, and I find myself totally altered. I confess that I suit myself to the place I am in. Calm, tranquil, and undisturbed as the objects around me, I find the waves of dissipation subside, and shall, in time, become as still as a mill-pond. The girls summon me to take an evening's walk with them. The girls!—Oh! Simpson, thereby hangs a tale; but I have not time to relate it, for they must not wait for me. Do continue to write to me. I have been three weeks from London, and have not yet forgot all my old acquaintances; let me hear something of them. Write me some news of them; not that I want amusement here, but I should be glad to hear how they go on. I shall plague you with my epistles, till I receive an order from you to be silent, and perhaps even then I may not obey you. At all times believe me,

Yours truly,

CHARLES HORTON.

LETTER IV.

To the SAME.

YOU will say I am a coxcomb in every thing. My passion for dress was the object of your ridicule in town; my letter-writing in the country will be liable to the same scourge.—Be it so; but I must write, and cannot retain a secret from you. It would be a violation of that vow I have made, to repose an unlimited confidence in you; and it would be to distrust your secrecy and your honour, to withhold any thing from you. Think not then, as you at first did, that the change from the town to the country has alone effected that alteration you have perceived in me: there is something else, and I will unfold the cause to you.

We have often, in our conferences, been at a loss to find out the reason, why my father should so industriously avoid taking me home with him, and be at the trouble, as he confessed, of getting into the house of commons, on purpose to have an opportunity of seeing me once a year. When I had finished my studies at Cambridge, I came to London; it was the place for a man of pleasure. I went to Paris, and it was by no means comparable to the city I had left: I returned to it again, therefore, with greater satisfaction. I was young and volatile, and found sufficient employment for every hour in the gay circle. I entered with avidity into pleasures, that only waited my taking possession of them. In the midst of these joys, my father summoned me to Elwood: 'twas then twelve years since I had seen it. I gave you but a faint description of the raptures I felt in seeing

seeing a place that was known to me from the earliest hours of my life, and from which I had been so long absent, and recollecting those puerile enjoyments I had experienced there. I arrived at Elwood in the morning. My heart softened with the expectation of clasping a father, whom I tenderly loved, in my arms. An unusual sensibility took possession of me, and I was almost dissolved in happiness and pleasure. Never before did I perceive myself so affected, and therefore am the less able to describe my sensations.— But I was at that moment more susceptible of receiving any tender impression, than I ever recollect to have been in my life. The embraces and caresses that my father and my aunt (a worthy sister of my mother's) lavished on me, only served to increase that tenderness of sentiment and disposition that almost overpowered me. I retired to dress for dinner; but could not overcome the force of that filial affection that produced such effects in me. I came down stairs in the same mood I went up, and was in a very pleasing reverie when the bell rang for dinner. I was the first in the parlour. My aunt soon entered, followed by a very genteel girl, the daughter of Mr. Webster, as I since understood, a man of a pretty estate in our neighbourhood, and then as a visiter to the young lady that followed her. Mrs. Allen (for so is my aunt called) told Miss Webster that I was her nephew. I made myself acquainted with her lips; but that ease and indifference with which I saluted her soon vanished, when I was about to approach the lovely maid, who was waiting my being introduced to her. That was an operation I could not go through at once. I hesitated, confused and amazed, and had not power to go up to

to her. A blush, that overspread her face and bosom, recalled my senses and attention to my situation, and, with a quivering lip, I touched her cheek. I would not have had you seen me thus abashed for the world; I should have afforded you an inexhaustible fund of ridicule and laughter. You would have derided my boasted intrepidity in attacking and subduing women; and my former fame would but have increased the glory of the victory a country girl has obtained over me. You will, doubtless, be glad to know what charms have had so powerful an effect upon me. You may imagine that I wish to exceed truth, in order to apologize for the easiness of the conquest.—'Tis no such thing; and you will form but an inadequate idea of her personal perfections, when I tell you, she is rather above the middle size, has a dignity in her air, and a lustre in her eyes, that dazzle and confound you, were you not relieved by the good-natured smiles that play around her mouth. Her skin is of the purest white; I do not mean such a cadaverous white as our pale-faced women of quality pique themselves upon—No—her skin is so transparent, that you can almost see the circulation of the blood. Her look bespeaks health. Though she is as delicate in her form as most of her sex, yet she possesses a plumpness that argues a good constitution. To you, who pretend to have outlived your passions, (for I cannot believe it) this particularity may be tedious; but to me it is most necessary to describe her person. She seems made for love, and love for her; and I should imagine, from physical reasons, that she is not, and cannot be averse to that passion. This was the form that struck me all in a heap.—We sat down to dinner; I ate very little; I could not—but my other senses were

were feasted.—“If this beautiful cabinet contains
“a perfect jewel,” said I to myself, “a ten-
“derness and purity of heart, a delicacy of sen-
“timent, and an intelligent mind, corresponding
“with the excellence of the exterior part of it,
“I shall be undone—and may at once give up
“myself for lost.”—I was yet but a stranger.—
Reserve closed her lips, and threw a mist over
her eyes, which, like the fog of the morning in
autumn, obscures the brightness of the sun, at
the same time that we are prevented from enjoy-
ing his warmth. My father kept up the conver-
sation of the table. I was abstracted, wandering,
thoughtful. He was frequently obliged to ask me
a question two or three times, before I had re-
collection enough either to understand, or to an-
swer it.—He addressed the charming Harriet (for
so I think she is called) with a degree of familiarity
that astonished me, and which I could not at
once comprehend. Her behaviour was respect-
ful, but affectionate. This wore an air of my-
stery.—Who was to solve the riddle?—Time.—
On him I depend for an explanation, as you must
also, for I am tired of writing. Adieu.

CHARLES HORTON.

L E T.

LETTER V.

TO CHARLES HORTON, Esq.

DO you imagine, sir, that I accept your confidence as a compliment, as a mark of your regard for me?—Is it so?—or is it because, amongst your extensive acquaintance, you have not one person in whom you can trust? blessed effects of such a delightful connection! What a charming reflection for a man to make, that he has not been able to procure one friend on whom he can rely; and yet, though you tacitly acknowledge the unworthiness of your acquaintances (improperly stiled friends) your curiosity impels you to learn some intelligence of them;—and of all other people in the world, you apply to me to gain that intelligence. But I will gratify you; and you shall know such part of their history from me, as I am acquainted with. Your friend Jack Matthews, crawled into the coffee-house the other day, just recovered from a certain fashionable distemper. Not contented with what he had suffered; not punished sufficiently by being confined to his chamber for fourteen weeks; with a voice yet tremulous through weakness; with a carcase emaciated with salutary, though compulsive, abstinence; with a constitution racked by a powerful and subtle medicine, he talked as freely as ever of indulging himself in his favourite pursuits. His friends congratulating him on his return to health and spirits, gave me an opportunity of condoling with him on his melancholy situation, and the deplorable desperate state I saw him in. He stared at me—“Why, what’s the matter?—The doctor says I am as sound as
“a roach,

"a roach, and I feel myself as hearty as a buck."
—"You deceive yourself," returned I. "You
are now in the same predicament with the
damned."—"Aye, how so, pray?"—"We
are told that they feel themselves," said I,
affected by the same desires and passions which
they had upon earth, but without the least
power or probability of gratifying them: I
take that to be your case." The more sensi-
ble and honest part of the room joined me in the
laugh against him, as I turned on my heel. I
have no doubt but his fellow-sufferers, of which
there were not a few assembled round him, re-
venged both him and themselves by abusing me.
I left them to divert themselves as they pleased.
Ned Baker, another of the worthies, has got
himself into an hobble. Nothing pleases him
but married women. He will disturb the peace
of an whole family, and make perhaps fifty peo-
ple miserable, that his inclination may be grati-
fied for half an hour. No matter what mischief
ensues: He must and will, if he can, possess the
woman whose face may chance to please him.
You are not a stranger to the many nocturnal
kickings, and ablutions from chamber windows,
he has gone through, in the course of his amours.
—One should have thought too, that his long
practice would have rendered him wary; but,
alas! a man has not always his senses about him.
A glover's handsome wife had the happiness to
catch his fancy. It is both impossible, and too
troublesome, to relate the many schemes he laid,
and arts he practised, to get possession of her
person. He succeeded, and was happy.—The
privacy, and extreme secrecy, with which this
amour was carried on for some little time, gave
him the strongest assurances of security: But the
fair

fair one was too many for him. Her husband knew the whole affair from the origin. It was not the first time that the ingenuity, and honest industry of the wife, had served to enrich the happy husband: this though, my friend Ned was not acquainted with. A proper inquiry was made into his fortune by the parties most interested; and as he was found to be a well-feathered bird, it was found necessary to pluck him a little;—and he was suffered to pursue his amour with success. One unfortunate evening however, Ned, solacing himself in the arms of his fair Circe, was discovered, to his utter confusion, by her husband, and proper assistants. The farce upon those occasions, that has been played so often, was here repeated with great *ecolat*. The lover's eyes were opened; but he began to see too late. He was obliged to compromise the affair, or his reputation of gallantry would have been eternally ruined. He paid a cool five hundred pounds for that jobb. He endeavours to carry the matter off as well as he can. I asked him, with a significant grin, to construe me two lines from Horace the other day.

* *Define matronas sectarier—unde laboris,
Plus haurire mali est—quam ex redocerere fructus.*

He tore the paper they were written on into peices, and threw them into the fire in a rage. I burst into a fit of laughter; and he made off as fast as he could: I delight in plaguing these puppies. George Edwards, is not a little chop-fallen since a late defeat at play. You may be sure I

English.

* Be cautious, my friend, how you cuckold your neighbour, The pleasure so small, with such great risque and labour.

condole

condole with him. The misfortunes these fellows bring on themselves, through their vanity or their folly, I rejoice at; it is a lesson that every young man ought to read: but I pity those who have, through inevitable accidents, suffered from the villainy and pride of the generality of mankind, who, honest and well-meaning in themselves, suspect not fraud or deceit in others. For them I grieve; for them my heart bleeds: but I cannot nor will not abate an inch of that sarcastic malignity I so happily possess, which plagues and mortifies the blockheads that surround me, who wish me to lament with them their ill fortune in those points, in which, if they succeed, in my opinion they deserve to be hanged.—There is one of your friends, whom I cannot help thinking well of; 'tis Harry Williams. I have observed him much of late. He seems oppressed with a settled melancholy: something hangs very heavy on his spirits. We talk together, when I see him, which is not frequently, of you. He is altered, not in his temper, but in his manner, since you saw him: his conversation is more irregular and unconnected, it bursts in starts from him: His eyes are full of tears, as he sits thoughtful and unheeded: but he endeavours to conceal the situation of his mind very industriously. A forced merriment, that sits very awkwardly upon him, only serves to betray those emotions he wishes to hide, and, to the accurate observer, tells what passes in his breast. He wants to hear from you: write to him, and try if you can draw the cause of his uneasiness from him. I have made some vain attempts to get at the knowledge of his affairs; but he is very reserved with me. So much for your list of acquaintances; that is, as much as I know of it.

You

You have succeeded, to your wishes, in astonishing me—Not that I am surprized at any thing you may do, but at your attempting to make me the confidant of your passion for this pretty, but unhappy girl, whom you have cast your eyes upon. Pray, Mr. Horton, what have you ever seen in me, to suppose me capable of assisting you in debauching a young woman, whom you have found placed under your father's care? For if you communicated your intentions to me on that head, and I did not instantly either reveal them to sir Thomas, or the girl herself, to put the one on her guard, and make the other send you back to London again, I should consider myself as an accomplice in *foro conscientie*. You must know, that though you pretend to be so much awed by her presence, and struck with respect, I do apprehend, that you would ruin her with as much compunction as an hungry fox devours a pullet, or one of our gormandizing citizens a terrine of turtle. I do not believe you capable of feeling the pure, the divine passion of love; at least I have the greatest reason to think so: and you are too little of the hypocrite to undeceive me. There is an honest openness, in betraying the dark side of a man's character sometimes, that may serve to make him in some degree estimable: It was something like that which first took my fancy, that first induced me to keep you alone company. The shallowest rivulets will sometimes run over grains of gold and precious stones. I discovered some valuable sentiments, some delineation of a good heart, at the bottom of that fashionable prattling stream of folly, that, muddy and feculent as it ran, could not entirely conceal your better qualities. It was that attach'd a man, whom winter has visit-

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ed fifty-three times, to a young fellow scarce four and twenty, who is one of the most remarkable about town for his dissipation, and unceasing attachment to his pleasures. While I do honour to your virtues, I compliment myself in the choice I have made of a friend. When I combat your follies, I assume the authority of a father; and I can do it with the better success, as your intimacy with me, and the confidence you repose in me, open to my view all the wishes of your heart. Know me, then, for both a friend and father, while you pursue those paths that every man of honour should tread in. When you deviate from them wilfully, I shall mourn for you as the parent, but shun you as unfit for the acquaintance or society of

EDWARD SIMPSON.

LET-

TO EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq.

I RECEIVED your letter, dear Simpson. You have drawn a most admirable picture of yourself: no limner could have executed it better. It gave me a great deal of pleasure to see those *minutiae* of your character so happily and correctly portrayed. Can they be done by a better hand than your own? You know, that a liberty of speech was the ground of our compact: presuming upon that, will you give me leave to ask, Why you indulge that severity of manners and disposition, which borders sometimes even on moroseness? You, who I am very sensible have as benevolent and as tender an heart as any man, and as much formed for the joys of society, by the apparent harshness of your conduct, frighten people from your society; and you almost live unnoticed. Are you afraid, should you assume a gentler manner, that virtue would become too amiable, and that you would have many people attempt to be your rivals in acts of humanity and goodness? I, who am well acquainted with you, can see through that transparent veil, under which you vainly endeavour to hide those good qualities which most other men would ostentatiously make a shew of; and those who really are not possessed of them, pretend to only, that they may be thought worthy of esteem. You do a prejudice to the cause you labour to establish; and people will shun the practice of those virtues, which they see accompanied by such a sternness and austerity, as must make them disagreeable to their companions, and shunned by the world.

I am

I am thoroughly convinced, that it is but assumed by you; that it is not your natural temper and disposition: I therefore can bear those admonitions I receive from you with the greatest temper and patience, convinced of the goodness of your intention, and the sincerity of your friendship. I know that you were accustomed to combat my sentiments and opinions with great zeal when we were together; you have not forgot it in your letters. But do not proceed upon false principles. Why do you suppose, I cannot be susceptible of love? Is it because you have heard me, who never till this hour was affected with that passion, laugh at those who either really felt it, or thought they did? Is it because you have heard me treat the fair sex in general with too much familiarity? You can have no other reasons. But I assure you, if I can judge of my own heart, I am as deeply in for it as ever man was. When I spoke so freely of the ladies as to deserve your reprehension, I only spoke from my own experience,—from my own knowledge. My having made so great a progress in that difficult science, of reading women, may astonish you; but as I have concealed those parts of my life which have afforded me practice in it from your knowledge, I do not wonder at it. I am at leisure here, and, as opportunity offers, will sit down now-and-then, and give you a faithful account of my past transactions. It will be rather a tedious piece of work; but when you have read it, you will not blame me for having such an opinion of women, and treating them in the manner I do. But it seldom happens, that a man can retain an opinion all his life-time, without having occasion to alter it. That time is approaching me very fast. The innocence, the beauty,

beauty, the good sense of the charming Harriet, all combine to cause my conversion; and as all profelytes are generally the most fervent and zealous in their religious acts, so shall I be the most foolish and fondest of lovers. The reserve that clouded her beauties, when I first arrived here, is worn off; we have attained a familiarity: the charms of her understanding develop themselves every day, and I find, every hour, something in her more worthy to be loved. I have inquired concerning her of my aunt; and was answered, she was the daughter of a very distant relation; that Sir Thomas took her, several years ago, on the death of her parents; and that her virtues have endeared her to him so much, that he esteems and looks upon her as his own child, and has, as I am informed, made a very genteel provision for her in his will. This is all I can learn: it is enough for me. Miss Webster her present companion, she, and I, frequently take an evening's walk. I have lost all that air of presumption and self-sufficiency that was so apparent in my behaviour. I cannot assume that intrepidity before her, that I used to pique myself upon so much. Sure it is the first step to a complete conquest, to humble the vanity of your antagonist. I am, from being lively, arrogant, and haughty, become grave, modest and humble;—attentive to every trifle that concerns her. Her looks have as great an effect upon me, as the change of the weather has on the barometer. I have some slight reason to imagine, she has perceived those assiduities; and the deference I pay her has not been unnoticed. But I have not been able to persuade myself to tell her the state of my heart. Indeed, I can hardly induce myself to

to

to believe, that the change I find in it is real. Uneasy when I am not with her,—and affected by certain painful sensations when I am;—my breast never experienced the like convulsions before,—and they proceed from a cause that I can hardly allow myself to guess at. Will you believe I am susceptible of the passion of love? Are not these symptoms, thus truly related to you, strong indications that such a thing may happen? Nay,—that it has. I do enjoy the account you send me of some of my quondam companions. Are not you too severe upon them? Poor Williams! I am uneasy at the account you give me of him: I remember him a long time, and do not recollect to have heard his character in the least impeached. My endeavour shall not be wanting to learn the cause of his trouble from him: he was always reserved with regard to his own affairs; and I have some reason to apprehend matters do not go so well with him as he deserves. If there is no injunction to the contrary, I will let you know every thing he imparts to me; this post shall take my letter to him. I will leave you, therefore, for that purpose, of writing to him. Farewell: and believe me, in spite of any thing you can say to me, your affectionate and sincere

CHARLES HORTON.

Mr. Horton's letter to Mr. Williams contains little more than a recapitulation of the account he had received from his friends, and is not worth the trouble of sending to him. It is not worth the trouble of sending to him.

L E T.

LETTER IVIL

TO CHARLES HORTON, Esq.—

THE pleasure I experienced, on the receipt of your letter*, is inexpressible. To have the happiness of being esteemed by you; to have you interested in my behalf; is the more flattering, as it was most unexpected. But this kindness has only done me a prejudice. Almost forgetting, and forgotten by, the world, you have recalled to my remembrance scenes that I wish never to recollect; and the thought that I have one friend yet remaining, has almost reconciled me to an existence I am heartily tired of. But this ray of goodness has only discovered to me more clearly the horrors of my situation: like a flash of lightning, it has only tended to make the darkness of the night that surrounds me more visible, and more tremendous. Lost to myself, and to every body, in a world where I am almost a stranger, I had no other intentions but that of quitting it. Why would you wish me to be miserable? Were I happy, or in the situation I could wish to be, your friendship would be an honour and an addition to my happiness: at present, it is a disgrace to you, and a pain to me. But I talk in parables. My reposing a confidence in you, that I have never done hitherto in any other person, will account for these contradictions; and if the resolution I have taken had not put it out of my power to be troublesome to

* Mr. Horton's letter to Mr. Williams contains little more than a recital of the account he had received from Mr. Simpson concerning him, and an earnest entreaty to acquaint him with any cause of trouble he might have, and to depend upon his friendship.

you,

you, in consequence of the recital of my misfortunes, I would have concealed them from you and the world at once. I shall demand your pity; perhaps you will drop a tear in your closet, at the perusal of my sufferings; that is the extent of my wish. I know your heart is tender, and your nature is compassionate; and am sure you will feel for me. One good consequence may result from your knowledge of my history: you will, in all human probability, arrive at fortune, honour, and titles; then think of me; and when you see the poor, distressed man of merit and character, you will learn to pity him,—will learn to esteem him more truly worthy of compassion, than those men whom custom and use have habituated to services, however menial and laborious, but to which, nevertheless, they were brought up. The soldier, inured to arms from his infancy, faints not under the weight of them; the porter, from use and practice, shall carry heavier burdens than a man stronger than himself can do, and not think them so oppressive; but a man of sensibility cannot support the contumelious sneers of his equals, perhaps his inferiors in every thing else but the unequal distribution of wealth. The marks of poverty are soon discovered. The rich fool has discernment enough to find out the man, whose pockets are not as well lined as his own. The mortifications that he must necessarily suffer, are the most pungent and severe: few have the generosity to assist him, without having the cruelty to reflect on his situation: I have experienced all this. You shall judge. To speak truly, I may call myself the first-born of disappointment. Inheriting the misfortunes of my parents, I labour under the same woes. My father, when he arrived at man's estate, saw that

patrimony enjoyed by others, which should have been his, if the prodigality of his ancestors had not prevented it. He married my mother, with the reputation of a fortune, which her uncle, with whom she lived and depended upon, and against whose consent she married, never would give her. When people are married, they must do as well as they can. Many were the schemes my father tried, but he failed in them all. An unlucky, and over-ruling fatality, prevented his succeeding; when a thousand other people, with less abilities, prospered and did well. A numerous family, which threatened to increase, added to his uneasiness. When my mother's uncle died, he left me the relics of his fortune, under certain restrictions. I was young; and found it a lucky accident for me, as it enabled my father to give me an education to fit me for any thing. At the school he sent me to, I first came acquainted with you. We were separated some time after: different avocations hurried us different ways: I remained at Oxford; you, after a short stay at Cambridge, went abroad. Our acquaintance dropped, till an accidental meeting in London renewed our former intimacy—The study of physic was the object of my choice: I had foolishly conceived great hopes, and with a boyish presumption, depended on my making a figure in the world, as soon as I should be known. The expences of my education swallowed up a large part of the pittance that was left to me; and when at age, I found the fortune I depended on smaller than I expected, but it was more than necessary to support me, till my practice should introduce me to wealth and honours. These were my foolish notions. My mother died about this time; and my father, having a large family, took

took a second wife. As the case generally is with all step-mothers, the children not being her own, she had not such affection for them as if they had. I thought she treated them ill, and took their part. We quarrelled. My father sided with his wife; and, not willing to live in perpetual animosity, I took my leave of the country, *and came to London*, flushed with hope, and buoyed up with expectation, and with a sum of money that, had it been put into trade, would have enabled me now to have given that subsistence to others which I am obliged to seek myself. You, and my friends, have frequently hinted an advancement of my fortune in a matrimonial way: that my heart would never agree to: it was engaged, and by the tenderest ties, to one of the worthiest of her sex. There was in her every thing I wished in a wife: Good nature, without folly; good sense, without ill nature or pride; and an agreeable face and person, without affectation. She lived in the neighbourhood of my father. We had seen each other frequently. She was attended by several suitors, but I saw her particularly attached to none; and therefore endeavoured to make myself agreeable to her, and, unhappily for us both, I succeeded but too well: for had I not, instead of two, there would have been but one person wretched. If she pleased me by her general manner of behaviour when so little known to her, she charmed me upon a more intimate acquaintance. As I had not many opportunities of seeing her—a necessity of separation produced an eclairsissement, sooner, it is most probable, than it would have otherwise happened. When I had opened my heart to her, her ingenuousness and sincerity gave me still a greater opinion of her. Her answer I never shall forget

“ —I have heard you with attention, Mr.
 “ Williams ; that alone will shew you, that what
 “ you have been saying is not disagreeable to
 “ me. Your partiality to me for some time past,
 “ the particularity with which you have treated
 “ me, has told me that secret, which I must
 “ confess I was not displeased at knowing. This
 “ will be sufficient to assure you, that I believe
 “ what you have told me. I wish to believe it.
 “ But that must suffice at present. My father,
 “ while he lives, will give me nothing. Your
 “ fortune is too small to support a wife. You will
 “ soon, it is to be hoped, be established in your
 “ profession. You have much to expect from
 “ your practice. We are yet young enough.
 “ Continue to esteem me, and we may both be
 “ happy.”—Her reasons were too true and too
 prudent to be contradicted. But we had sacrificed
 sufficiently to prudence, and that could not stifle
 the dictates of affection—Our hearts were united ;
 we both felt the force of a mutual and tender
 passion. A presentiment of what has since hap-
 pened, and the dread of not seeing her again,
 though I most ardently wished to spend my life
 with her, filled my soul with grief. I could not
 help expressing my fears. The melancholy with
 which she saw me oppressed alarmed her, and
 she caught the tender infection from me. “ Why
 “ are you so dejected, Mr. Williams ? You
 “ make me fear—I know not what. We shall
 “ meet soon again, and then be happy toge-
 “ ther.”

“ Ah ! Betsy, but that time is at a great
 “ distance, and many things may intervene, and
 “ destroy our happiness.”

“ Don’t

"Don't prophesy misery to yourself and me too. I have assured you, that I esteem you more than any other man in the world: that, could it be with prudence completed, I should not hesitate one moment to give you my hand at the altar. What then can happen, that you fear so much? do you think that I can forfeit my honour and sincerity, by encouraging the addresses of any other man? or, are you fearful that you cannot remain attached to me only, till something favourable for us shall happen?"

"Neither, my love," cried I, embracing her, the tears of gratitude bursting from my eyes at the same instant—"Neither: I know my own heart; and yours is too tender ever to give me any cause to complain of your desertion of me; a desertion that would be attended with the most fatal consequences to me."

"Never fear it, Harry."

Thus in mutual protestations of unalterable affection, and untainted fidelity, we passed the time, till the moment of separation arrived. Alas! it arrived too soon for us, who never wished to part, and who were doomed, by the severity of our fortune, never to meet again. Our embraces were mingled with sighs and lamentations. In a most affectionate manner she bade me farewell. Tears came to her relief, and eased her. My heart was too full to say a word: half stifled, by the want of expression for my passion, my eyes only could acquaint her with what I suffered, and I stalked away from her in a state of silent stupefaction; nor did I well recover myself from this situation, till my arrival in town. A stranger to London and its amusements, I did not plunge rapidly into the

stream of dissipation, nor did the eddy draw me insensibly in; that was not so much my foible. I met several of my former companions here. If I say that my heart and my pocket were always at the service of those that wanted the assistance of either, I shall only tell the truth, and give the greatest cause of my consequent distresses. To my own folly, my misfortunes may be attributed. My incautious reliance upon the faith of false friends, and my own fondness for society, led me, step by step, to my undoing. I found, as I gained experience, that the world overlooked the young men of all professions. To the aged, the wary, and the circumspect they only trusted. A good lesson to teach me, but it was then too late, that none but those possessed of fortunes sufficient to support them without any profession, should enter into them. My living was expensive, my imprudence great, and when reduced to my last guinea, I had found that knowledge I before wanted. It was my business, as much as possible, to conceal the disagreeable change in my circumstances; I did it as carefully as possible: But suspicion and curiosity, like crows over carrion, hovered round, and betrayed me. I had contracted debts; 'tis true, they were very small ones,—but, small as they were, I had no method of paying them. I retired from the converse of mankind; locked myself up, and considered what I should do to extricate myself. I had relations, but my pride prevented my applying to them. “The nobility, the gentry, the commercial people of this city,” said I to myself, “possess the fortunes of princes, it is most likely they possess a princely generosity also; let me try them:—I will acquaint them with my case.” I wrote anonymous letters to some of those

those who had the most popular characters for generosity and humanity ;—I explained my wants ; and related my situation—“ I am honest —am poor—am most distressed—You have a “ superfluity—Spare me a little of that, and “ rescue me from the most dreadful misery.— “ Small will be the sum to enable me to provide “ for myself, and become an useful member of “ society”—Fool that I was ! little knowing that the artificial wants of mankind rose in proportion to their fortunes—The man who, with 100l. a year, can eat a beef-steak and drink porter, may be thankful and satisfied, and find nature sufficiently supplied, and wanting nothing,—possessed of 5000, he will eat nothing but turtle and ortolan, and drink nothing but champagne and burgundy.—I knew not that their nature altered ; but I knew that their sentiments underwent a change with their situation in life, and that, with a rich man, there was but one crime never to be pardoned, and that was, to be just exempted from poverty, and yet be independent. Indeed ’tis seldom such a thing happens. I need not tell you, that my applications were in vain. No one troubled their heads about me. I might be an impostor, or an object worthy the notice of some wealthy man ; let the case be what it might, it was totally indifferent to the persons to whom these applications were addressed. I could neither furnish amusements or variety to sharpen the satiated appetites of the favourites of fortune : I had no vote, had no pretty wife or sister to sell, had not invented a new dish—had not discovered a secret stroke at play ;—I did not understand the noble art of *Leger de main* ; In short, I deserved to be starved, for not being able to get my bread by the dexterity of my
B 4 fingers,

fingers, or the pliability of my principles. I was an useless block, that was thrown on one side, while the great machine of Providence performed its operations as well without as with me.—I then began to lament my not having been taught some trade, that by the sweat of my brows I might have supported myself. The cobbler that soled my shoes was the object of my envy : and though he could not have told three out of the four and twenty letters, I would willingly have exchanged situations with him. It came into my head, that there were many men in this city that got bread by writing. I had a turn for poetry—so sat down, and wrote a bitter satire against the times. I combated the manners of the age with honest fervor, and railed at the degeneracy of the times with the utmost virulence. My late disappointments had increased my rage. I sent for a book-seller.—He read it.

“ Sir, it is clever—very clever, sir ;—but it
 “ will not do—it is too general.—People are not
 “ so much out of humour with themselves in
 “ this age of politeness, as to look too nicely into
 “ their own deformities.—You are a poet, sir ;
 “ you know the fable of the man with the two
 “ bags—He carried his neighbours faults before
 “ him—but he threw his own behind him. You
 “ abuse the rich ; the rich only buy these things,
 “ the poor have nothing to do with them.—Did
 “ you ever know an ordinary person fond of
 “ looking in a glass ?——How can you suppose
 “ people will be desirous of seeing their own fol-
 “ lies magnified ? This is too general.—But if
 “ you have any particular satire—any lampoon—
 “ any tale highly seasoned—you will derive both
 “ honour and profit from it.”——I had neither.
 And found, with Horace,—

Contra

* Contra ne lucrum nil valere candidum
Pauperis ingenium————

“ Pray, sir,” said he, “ did you ever try
“ your hand at prose ?—Do you think you could
“ write a novel ?”——

“ I never tried—and doubt my own abilities
“ very much.—If you mean such tales as are
“ thrust upon the town every day—I cannot have
“ patience to read them—I am sure I could not
“ write them.—If you wish in a novel to incul-
“ cate some hidden truth, to hide a jewel under
“ so thin a veil that its brilliancy may be easily
“ discerned, there should be a reference to the
“ manners and the time in which we live ; there
“ should be the greatest appearance of probabi-
“ lity carried through the allegory, that your
“ reason should not be shocked while your ima-
“ gination was pleased.—If novels were properly
“ regulated, and with this design, they might
“ become most useful. A moral lesson, other-
“ wise dry and fatiguing in itself, might be com-
“ municated in a pleasing dress. A pill has the
“ desired effect, though it is wrapped up in gold
“ or silver leaf. The more inviting the way of
“ conveying instruction, the better.—For who
“ are they that read novels ?—Not the men of
“ learning, they despise them.—Not the men of
“ business, they have other employments.—Not
“ the rich and great, for they have other amuse-
“ ments.—Not the poor, for they cannot pur-
“ chase them.—The middling rank of people
“ only are the readers.—The young, the vola-
“ tile, the hearts most susceptible of all kinds of

* The fairest genius of a poor man has no weight against
wealthy lucre.

“ impressions—the imaginations heated with the
 “ fire of youth—to these the chafteft images
 “ should be prefented; for these the pureft pic-
 “ tures painted and selected.—Vice should be, as
 “ it always really is, attended with that trouble
 “ and inextricable confusion that should deter
 “ the wandering feet of innocence and credulity
 “ from treading in her paths.—Where it is ne-
 “ cessary to give a loose to the invention, care
 “ should be taken not to pass the line that should
 “ be laid down by all judicious writers.—I will
 “ tell you one instance, how a young mind may
 “ be affected by an improper representation in a
 “ novel.—You remember the adventures of Pe-
 “ regrine Pickle with the fair Fleming.”

“ I do.—That very anecdote has had a
 “ greater effect upon me, than any other part of
 “ the work; and I dare say, there are more
 “ people who read that book pity Pickle, from
 “ his being disappointed in the commission of an
 “ immoral, illegal action, than there are who
 “ abhor and detest him for his villainous attempt
 “ to commit it, or his treacherous design upon
 “ Emilia Gauntlet. It is in cases of that nature,
 “ where an author is obliged, at some parts of
 “ his work, to give a description, he should curb
 “ his pen.—There are more people who take
 “ their notions and manners from books of that
 “ kind, than from either the precepts that may
 “ be delivered to them by their parents or tutors,
 “ or the examples that may be shewn to them by
 “ the most worthy of mankind. Novels, with
 “ this respect, might be made subservient to the
 “ noblest purposes, and to answer the best ends;
 “ and were I a despotic prince, I would sooner
 “ hang an author that wrote a work that had a
 “ direct or indirect tendency to corrupt the mo-

“ rals

“ rals of the youthful, and consequently the most
“ part of my subjects, than I would whip a man,
“ who, impelled by absolute necessity, should
“ commit a robbery on the high road. We de-
“ generate, we descend into the depravities of
“ our nature, that we are subject to, but too
“ soon. We have no need of allurements. We
“ want nobody to entice us. You know my sen-
“ timents, sir.—I cannot, in my present mode of
“ thinking, undertake any thing of the kind you
“ want; and had rather remain in want of a
“ dinner, than purchase it at the expence of the
“ morals, the virtue, and consequently the hap-
“ piness of my fair countrywomen.”

We parted; for my notions suited him not.

But I am too tedious. My design was to write an history, not to give you my insipid discourses. I was not far from the truth, when I told the bookseller that I had rather be in want of a dinner (for that was really my situation) than be guilty of so infamous a thing. By this time it was with difficulty that I could procure myself subsistence. Wherever I turned my eyes, horror and ruin presented themselves to me. I had no step to take, no visible means of living. In a melancholy state of despondence I passed my wretched hours, lamenting my former folly, and my present inability to provide for myself. Poverty had taken hold of me, and destruction was advancing by hasty strides. The woman of the house where I lodged gave me warning to depart. Without a shilling in my pocket, where was I to turn myself? At that juncture a small sum of money, which I had lent to a most worthy fellow (now dead, but whose memory will be ever dear to me) was paid me very unexpectedly. It enabled me to quit my lodging with some degree
of

of credit. I got into another as retired as possible. Some service I happened to do to the brother of the woman who kept the house, who was ill, gave them a good opinion of me: my deportment increased it, and they began to treat me with a civility and regard I had very little reason to expect. They saw through circumstances that I was very industrious to conceal. The honest frankness of Mrs. Browne (for that was her name) dispelled those fears which followed the discovery of my affairs. Though distressed themselves, and driven at some times to very great extremity, they cheerfully contributed every thing in their power to make me forget my troubles.—“The fortunate shun and hate one another; the wretched love and seek each other.”—A maxim equally true and melancholy. Dreadful association! when a parity of misfortunes can only be the means of our loving each other; and when misery is the only tie, the only band of amity and society: yet this is the case. Without a certainty for the time of payment of what I owed them for lodging and other things, or indeed without a certainty of being paid at all, they treated me as a brother, or rather as a son. But an accident happened, that seemed to promise to put an agreeable termination to these difficulties.

A man and his wife, just married, took the first floor in the house where I lodged.—“She is a sweet pretty woman,” said Mrs. Browne to me in a few days after; “and I wonder how she could marry so disagreeable a man as her husband seems to be. But there is an elderly gentleman that they talk of a great deal, who sends them money, and, I believe, is fond of the wife.”

I did

I did not much regard this account, till accidentally seeing him go up stairs, thought I knew him, and determined to watch him as he went out. I did so, and found I was not deceived: he was a relation to me, though a distant one; a man of a plentiful fortune, had a wife and a daughter, kept the best company, and held a distinguished rank in life.

I informed Mrs. Browne of all this. "It may be a lucky stroke," said she, "for you. I have found out the whole mystery of the people above stairs. This gentleman keeps the woman, and has done so for some time, but has lately caused this unfortunate man to marry her: he uses the greatest caution when he comes here, and never speaks to her but before me; never goes up stairs to her: and as I am frequently with him, will take such an opportunity of introducing a discourse about you, as shall do you some service; besides, I am sure of having madam of our side."

"I am convinced you will use your best endeavours to serve me."

I was at that time invited to go into Suffolk, to spend a few weeks with a friend whom I had formerly rendered some little services to. In a short time after my arrival there, I received a letter from Mrs. Browne, acquainting me, "That she had spoken to my relation about me; that he was much concerned at hearing her account concerning me; had promised to do every thing in his power, and desired me to write to him; and that his mistress appeared very much my friend."

My hopes began to revive. "He will take a pride," said I to myself, "in doing a generous action, in putting a young man into the
"road

“ road of fame and fortune, and relieving him
“ from distresses that unfortunate imprudence has
“ led him into, not his crimes or vices.” I
wrote to him. A friend, whom I had intrusted
the letter to, waited on him. He read it with
complacency : “ He wished me to open my af-
“ fairs more fully to him : it was his intention to
“ serve me.” I wrote to him again, and ex-
plained my situation to him, and told him how
small a sum would re-establish my affairs. I found
I had a powerful friend in his girl, and concluded,
through her, that I should succeed. He was
obliged to go to his seat in the country. The ne-
gociation was broken off for some time. I ex-
pected to see him in town in the winter, and was
not disappointed. In the interim, a quarrel had
happened between his mistress and him, and they
saw each other no more. I prevailed on Mrs.
Browne to write to him, to beg the favour of
speaking a few words to him. He came : his
conversation turned on his dear little girl, and
asked if she had heard any thing of her. Mrs.
Browne at last mentioned me as the cause of his
being sent for : it was upon that subject she wanted
to speak to him ; but that was a subject that he
did not want to talk about. He shifted it off ;
excused himself ; in short, he would do nothing
he had promised. There was no compelling him
to keep his word, and he retired as soon as he
could. There is no doubt but that if my old
friend had spoken in my behalf, I should have suc-
ceeded. It was only the blandishments of an har-
lot that could excite him to do an honest or a ge-
nerous action. But in proportion as his behaviour
was infamous and base, that of Mrs. Browne was
unexpectedly noble. “ He will not do any thing
“ for you, Mr. Williams,” said she. “ He has
“ broke

“ broke through every promise he made, as well to
“ me as to other people : he has forfeited his ho-
“ nour, and has been guilty of telling a deliberate
“ falsehood. But it does not signify being cast
“ down,” added she, seeing every mark of con-
fusion, sorrow, and disappointment in my face.—
“ Make yourself easy : while I have an house,
“ you shall not want a lodging ; while I have a
“ joint of meat, you shall not want a dinner : we
“ were born to help one another.”—I looked at
her some time without speaking. The contrast
between her deportment and that I had lately ex-
perienced, was too striking not to affect me inex-
pressibly. I found myself too full to speak, and
retired hastily to my own room, and there gave a
vent to that passion which had almost suffocated
me. I knew not what to do : the kindness and
friendship of the good woman had affected me
more than the ill treatment I had met with from
my relation. “ It may be,” said I, “ that the
“ Author of all good will put it in my power,
“ at some moment or other of my life, to repay
“ those extraordinary acts of generosity and dis-
“ interestedness.” To a mind so susceptible of
gratitude as mine, this was an action never to be
repaid, an obligation never to be cancelled ; the
reflection gave me pain.

This was not the only cause I had for trouble.
I mentioned to you, in the beginning of this me-
lancholy recital, that my heart was unalterably at-
tached to one, in whom I found every requisite I
wished to make me happy as a wife. About this
time my dearest Betsy’s father died. I never sup-
posed she would be possessed of a large fortune ;
but it turned out considerably less than was ima-
gined, and she was left in the power of an ill-
natured and avaricious uncle ; besides, her attach-
ment

tachment to me drew on her the reproaches of her family; who had less generosity than she had; for the situation of my affairs was not long unknown. We corresponded regularly.—I was the only person in whom she would confide. Every account she gave me of what she suffered, through her unfortunate partiality for me, struck a dagger to my heart. I could not think of marrying her in my situation, had I even the consent of her family. I had her calamities and my own to bear. Though my letters endeavoured to conceal my situation as much as possible from her, yet it was in vain; for her penetration saw through the thin disguise, and she could do nothing but lament along with me. From the threats of my more obdurate creditors, I expect shortly to find myself in jail, totally secluded from the hope of extricating myself. I must fall a prey to my ill fortune. Without money, without friends, what can I do? where can I turn me? with that shabby appearance of gentility, which so effectually discovers poverty, when I venture into company, which is very seldom, I assume a character that is very foreign to me. A fixed and settled melancholy preys on my vitals: yet I attempt to be merry, and endeavour to laugh, while my heart is bursting with anguish and affliction. I have frequently considered a ballad-singer as the most pitiable kind of beggar that ranges the streets: the torment of being obliged to sing (which one necessarily supposes to be the consequence of plenty and good spirits) while the poor wretch is almost starved, and promoting the merriment of other people, while want and misery force the appearance of mirth, is only fit to be practised in the Spanish inquisition. Yet I am very little better. I appear in masquerade, and, under a fictitious jollity,

jollity, veil destructive grief, which, like the fox * with the Spartan boy, gnaw my bowels. At home I give a loose to them; and when no eye sees me, when no ear hears me, pour out my complaints. I seek sleep, but in vain. I lie down, and am then delivered intirely to those dreary thoughts that destroy me. Then I find, that

Quilts fill'd high

With gossamore and roses, cannot yield

The body soft repose: the mind kept waking

With anguish and affliction.— MASSINGER.

I lie down to a sleepless night, and rise to a joyless day, encompassed with ills, and surrounded by misfortunes: I pass my time in sorrow and poverty. You will be surprized, sir, when I tell you my debts do not exceed three hundred pounds in all: yet have no friend that can or will assist me. I see people around me every day, who with no visible means of living, without trade or profession, occupation or calling, live in splendor, and owe five times as much as I do: they have a never-failing friend to apply to in the badness of their principles, and their industry in gaming.—By taking proper advantage of the follies or necessities of mankind, they prosper. I can be poor, but dare not be dishonest; and though I have known the most pressing wants, have never done any thing

* Lycurgus, the legislator of Sparta (which was the most famous state in ancient Greece for her military discipline and heroic virtue) encouraged the boys to commit theft; if undiscovered, they were rewarded, if they were found out in the act, they were punished very severely. This was to teach them caution and vigilance in ambuscades and military enterprizes.—The story which Mr. Williams alludes to is that of a Spartan boy, who, having stolen a fox, and hiding him under his cloak, the more effectually to conceal his fraud, suffered the beast to eat through his side; and when he could no longer withstand the anguish, and perhaps faint through loss of blood, and not till then, he let the fox escape, and expired soon after.

beneath

beneath the character of a gentleman. But I will take up no more of your time. I have opened my heart to you : and should you hear me condemned when I am gone, do me the justice to vindicate me from the censure of the malicious and slanderer.

I quit England, and go I neither know or care whither, or in what station. I can bury myself in the desarts of America, can fly to the banks of the Ganges, but I cannot leave my melancholy reflections behind me. They will accompany me wheresoever I go, and embitter every hour of my miserable life. Your searches after me will be in vain. This place I leave to-morrow. It was not with a view of obtaining any thing else from you than compassion, that I acquainted you with my history. England ! my native country !——to-morrow I forsake you.——Renowned for your wealth, your laws, your freedom—your sons lose those finer feelings, that dignify human nature, in their insatiable thirst for riches, and honour in consequence of them : they govern themselves by false principles,—and act in pursuance of them. To be rich is to be happy. They know it to be so : and the richer they are, they are so much the happier. I neither wanted or sought after wealth : the happy mediocrity, the comfortable independance, was all my wish. The God of nature has thought fit to place me in the more active scenes of life. I must submit. Adieu then, my dear Horton : may that blessing, which has escaped me, ever attend you ; may you be as happy, as I am wretched !

HENRY WILLIAMS.

L E T.

L E T T E R V I I I .

T O E D W A R D S I M P S O N , E s q ;

I HAVE received a very long letter from poor Williams, giving me an account of his life. It is enclosed herein. Your compassionate heart, my dear Simpson, will be much affected at the perusal of it. I gave him the tribute he demanded—a tear. Strange obstinate pride! to remove himself so suddenly, from friends that would wish to serve him; from friends that would endeavour to compensate for all the evils he has already suffered. From the certainty I have that you would relieve him in his present melancholy situation, if he is yet in London, I have imparted his letter to you, and for that reason only. There are many parts of his conduct very reprehensible; but, upon the whole, he is more to be pitied than blamed. Were it possible to reinstate his affairs, he would be so far profited by the stock of experience he has gained in the course of his misfortunes, that he would take care of himself for the future. The reading his history; the reflection, that a young gentleman well educated, that had hopes, and those not groundless, to be raised to a more elevated station, should be obliged to quit his native country, for the want of a small part of those enormous sums that some of our thoughtless men of fashion squander away, either at the gaming-table, or, sometimes, in more unwarrantable pursuits; made me more melancholy and grave, than I had been for some days before.

“What is the matter, Charles?” said my father. “You seem out of spirits.”

“An

“ An account I have received from a friend,
“ of some misfortunes he has met with, has gi-
“ ven me much concern.”

“ What has he been cheated at play ? or has
“ his girl jilted him ?”

“ Neither, sir.”

“ Who is it ?”

“ That I am not allowed to disclose : but I
“ will impart to you what has given me uneasi-
“ ness. I am not acquainted with the tenderness
“ of your disposition, or you will not hear it with-
“ out concern.”

“ I hope,” said Mrs. Allen, “ that you will
“ let us be of the party. We women are curi-
“ ous folks ; and I dare say, the girls would ra-
“ ther go without their dinners, than not hear
“ the story.”

“ I would do any thing to give you or them
“ pleasure, my dear aunt ; and after dinner, will
“ read it to you.”

The girls thanked me with their eyes.

“ I hope,” said my father, “ it is not Mr.
“ Simpson whom you grieve for.”

“ It is not, sir.”

“ Was he well when you heard from him ?
“ He is one of the most valuable of all your ac-
“ quaintance. You are not forgotten by him you
“ you see.”

An impatience and curiosity in the women, to
learn the history of my poor friend, was easily to
be observed. I wished to see how they would be
affected with it. We sat down to dinner. They
eat but little. Each seemed afraid to indulge,
lest we should prolong a repast they wished at an
end. I gratified a malicious pleasure, in keep-
ing the table covered longer than I usually did.
The disposition of Harriet, was the great object
of

of my attention. I believed it tender, but had not an opportunity of trying it; I therefore wished to know if she would be like Otway's *Monimia*,

When a sad story has been told, I have seen
Thy little breast, with soft compassion swell'd,
Shove up and down, and heave like dying birds.

At last, all impediments were removed. The joint request of the company was, that I would fulfil my promise, and satisfy their curiosity. I consented: and went through the recital of the unfortunate Williams's adventures, carefully concealing his name. During the time I was reading, a melancholy and attentive silence was observed, except when interrupted by a broken and half stifled sigh, that now and then escaped. I remarked the tear stealing down Harriet's cheek sometimes. The women were all affected greatly. I finished; folded up the paper put it in my pocket, and first broke the silence that still continued amongst them, though I had done reading.

"Do not you think, sir," said I, addressing my father, "that I should betray a bad head and a worse heart, if I refused to sympathize with my poor friend?"

"I do; and am sorry that his history has been hitherto unknown to me: I would have endeavoured to have made his life more agreeable to him, and to have restored him to that happiness he seems to despair of.—I heartily lament that, by his sudden departure, it is out of my power to serve him."

Mrs. Allen was extremely severe on the conduct and behaviour of his relation. Miss Webster

ster felt for his parents, who lost in him so good a son. It was reserved for the lovely Harriet to speak those sentiments, that so perfectly coincided with mine.

“His situation,” said she, blushing as she spoke, “may be very bad; his future life beset with dangers and difficulties; but from what I can learn of his character, he would think nothing of whatever might happen to him, if the lady on whom he has placed his affections was but happy. I pity her. What hours of misery must she experience! what years of trouble and misfortune must she go through!”

It was too much: I could not suffer her to proceed.

“I am sorry to have made you so melancholy. If I thought my friend’s history would have afflicted you so much, I would never have read it.”

“You only give us an opportunity,” said she, taking her trembling hand from between mine, “of exercising our humanity. Though happy myself, I can feel very sensibly for those who labour under misfortunes. I only give that pity I should expect from others, were I in such a situation. It may be my own case at some time or another.”

I took the first vacancy in conversation, to give it a more general turn; and succeeded in part—But all that evening could observe she was very abstracted, *revenue*. It increased, if possible, my good opinion of her. There was a gentle languor in her manner, a softness in her eyes, and a tender melancholly diffused over all her features, that made her more amiable than ever I had seen her before. There is no resisting a fine woman thus

thus softened, thus melted by compassion. She represents an angel, one of the superior order of beings, lamenting and commiserating the misfortunes and calamities to which we poor mortals are subjected. Every tear she lets fall, upon such an occasion, should be a star in the galaxy, or at least a gem to deck the greatest monarch's crown on earth. Not a sigh heaved her bosom, that mine was not responsive to. I sympathized, at the same time that I enjoyed her distress. Could she have seen my heart at that moment, she would have found her lovely self the only directress of it, and her dear image indelibly engraved there. That would have been the moment sacred to pity and tenderness, to have thrown myself at her feet, and confessed my affection for her: and that would have been the only moment, in which I imagine I should have had any chance of succeeding. She keeps me at such a distance, that I can approach her in no other light or shape than that of a mere acquaintance. The propriety of her demeanour prevents any forward familiarity, that I might be, at some times, tempted to take with her: her look awes me. I should not be myself, I adore her so much, did I not know she is a woman at bottom. That still gives me some hope, though it is at a great distance. And though she is the loveliest of women, she seems more respected and beloved in the house than any body in it. I can talk or write of nothing else. My father and I intend going into Kent to-morrow; that is, my father has occasion to go there, and proposed it to me to accompany him, which I cannot decently refuse, though to tell you the truth, I had much rather stay at Elwood. We shall not return for three days: I shall think it an age. Miss Webster is to

go home as soon as we come back. An opportunity of telling my charming Harriet how much I love her may then present itself. I keep a corner in my heart for you, and never shall suffer any other passion to obliterate my friendship.

CHARLES HORTON.



LETTER IX.

TO EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq.

I DON'T suppose, my dear friend, that you expected to receive a letter from me till my return to Elwood again: But such a pleasing consequence has arisen from my journey hither, that I cannot avoid sitting down, and communicating it to you. We arrived at R—— the day before yesterday, in the afternoon; and, as I was standing at the gate of the inn where the chaise stopped, the stage from Gravesend passed by me, with some passengers in it. Two countrymen, who were standing by me, perceived somebody in the coach; and crying out, “There he is! that is he!” followed it as fast as they could. I immediately inquired into the meaning of their hurrying after the coach; and learned, that they had been robbed that day, and it was supposed that it was in pursuit of the highwayman they were gone. Whether it was for want of something else to do; whether it was through curiosity; or, whether it was because I saw somebody in the coach whose face I thought I knew, I cannot

I cannot tell; but I determined to attend at the examination of the highwayman, who was then before a justice, as I was informed.—We must agree with Hamlet, that,

There is a providence shapes all our actions
Rough-hew them as we will—

I did not arrive at the justice's till the examination of the prosecutors was almost over; and learned by the way, that the respectable person whom we were going before had been a baker, and from the manufacturing of bread, became a dispenser of law and justice. I mingled among the crowd that attended, with a profound silence, the decrees of this awful tribunal; and, to my very great astonishment, beheld my friend Williams, in the person of the supposed highwayman. He was disguised, but could not escape my recognition. Nevertheless I waited, with great anxiety, till the farmer had finished his evidence; which consisted of nothing more, than that he and his companion had been robbed, that day, by a man in such coloured cloaths as the prisoner wore: that he believed him to be the man, and swore to the cloaths.

The justice addressed the unhappy culprit with an inexpressible ferocity, heightened by magisterial authority; and told him, that he had heard what he had been accused of, which crime he had no sort of doubt but that he was guilty of. "Neither," added he, "have I any doubt of your being an old offender:—For your returning to this place after the people you had robbed, has too much cunning to be the trick of a novice. Besides, here has been a pair of loaded pistols found upon you: and how

“came a man of your appearance with twenty guineas in your pocket? Come, friend, what have you to say in your defence, before I commit you?”

“I have every thing to say in my defence that an innocent, and an injured man, can have,” —replied Williams.

“A very innocent man to be sure,” returned the justice—

“I must not be condemned unheard, sir,” said Williams—“I aver, once more, that I am as innocent of this crime as you. I have reasons, that I will not disclose here, for wishing to conceal myself: In consequence of them, I purchased these cloaths at Gravesend. The landlord at the sign of the *** sold them to me. I am a stranger here, but, were my character known, you would never suspect me to be guilty of such a crime. You have no right to commit me: neither of my prosecutors swear positively to me. None of their goods were found in my possession.”

“Oh, oh, you want to instruct me, do you? Friend, these are all the tricks of an old rogue. What is your name?”

I found it was going hard with my friend, and therefore bustled through the crowd to get up to him. The noise I made drew their attention towards me. The justice and prisoner perceived me much about the same time. As soon as Williams saw me, he turned hastily from me, and, hiding his face with his hands, exclaimed, “Now I am lost indeed!”

“Aye, aye, I imagined,” said his worship, “we should find you out at last. You do not pretend to innocence now, I hope. Come forward, come forward, young man. Here,

“hand

“ hand him the book: What have you to say
“ against this rogue here?”

“ I have to tell you, sir, that I have known
“ this gentleman for several years; and I know
“ him possessed of the greatest worth, honour,
“ and integrity; and that he scorns the com-
“ mission of such a crime as he is accused of, as
“ much as you or I do.”

“ Aye; and pray who are you, that take
“ upon you to say so much?”

“ One who can prove what he says; the son
“ of Sir Thomas Horton, who is now at an inn
“ in this town, and who will see justice done to
“ this unfortunate gentleman, who has been so
“ wrongfully accused.”

The justice's consequence began to abate.

“ It may be so,” returned the magistrate, “ he
“ shall have as much lenity shewn him, and as
“ much justice, as he requires.”

The farmers were re-examined; their evidence
of the time they were robbed, and the time the
coachman took up Williams, was sufficient to
have acquitted him: however, I would not suffer
even a suspicion of guilt to remain. I sent for
my father, who came directly. The justice
suffered us to bail him for that night; and the
next day the innkeeper from Gravesend was to
appear, to bear testimony concerning the purchase
of the cloaths: an express was, therefore, sent
off for him. I had told my father who the person
accused was, when I requested him to join me
to bail him; and we took him to our inn with us.
He was very anxious to hear from him how he
came hither; but his delicacy prevented his ask-
ing, and we could get nothing from him but those
acknowledgments of his gratitude for the favour
we had conferred on him, which, he said, we so

much deserved. I could not tell him that his history had been imparted to my father; and we remained in an awkward situation till after supper. Williams had sat all the evening buried in profound thought: sighs only escaped his lips: he seemed overwhelmed with trouble and sorrow. When the cloth was removed, though he eat nothing, he appeared less disturbed, and a faint gleam of cheerfulness animated his countenance: he had by this time acquired more spirits and confidence.

When we were left alone, he addressed us: “It is not, gentlemen, that I am at all fearful of the consequence of the examination to-morrow: the innkeeper from Gravesend will sufficiently prove my innocence: it is not that afflicts me. It is, to think what a train of misfortunes attends me: go where I will, they pursue me; and having driven me to the verge of destruction, they would push me over the precipice. I was not unworthy of your notice once, Sir Thomas; but now I am a forlorn poor wretch, beneath the notice and regard of any body. The story of so unfortunate a man as I am, would be too long to trouble you with; or you should be acquainted with the causes that have reduced me to this situation.”

I interrupted him, and told him, “That when I received his letter, as there was but little hope of ever seeing him again, I had communicated it to my father: that we both lamented and condemned the hasty step he had taken, in withdrawing himself so precipitately and suddenly from his friends: that we both rejoiced in having so fortunately met with him

“in

“ in the hour of his distress, and it would be a pleasure to hear how he came that road.”

“ To give you that pleasure,” he replied, “ is all the return my gratitude can make for your generosity to me. I thought to have escaped from this country unnoticed and unknown; but it was the will of Providence it should be otherwise. When I wrote to you, I never expected to have seen you again; for nothing could have made me communicate my unfortunate life to you, if I had supposed we should ever have met again. It unburthened my heart, and eased it of a load, scarcely to be borne, when the opportunity offered of proposing my troubles in the bosom of a sincere and affectionate friend. I had determined to quit this kingdom by the first opportunity, when you wrote to me. My departure was delayed only for the purpose of answering your letter. Nothing very material has happened since. I resolved to endure any hardships, any difficulties, rather than go to a prison. The busy tongue of scandal had already been industrious in publishing an account of my poverty and disgrace: my friends were reproached for their attachment to me, and this cruelty doubled my affliction. I should have borne my own troubles with more fortitude, if my friends had been exempted from suffering along with me. How vain and futile is the observation, that our happiness all lies in our own breasts! it does not: it chiefly depends upon the opinion of others. I will allow it to be the prejudice of custom: but it is very fatal! All that remained for me was, to fly. The people, to whose generosity I was indebted, for every thing, were made acquainted

“ with my intention to take this step; they
“ could by no means afford to lose the money I
“ owed them: yet, if I continued with them,
“ the debt must be necessarily increased. I, at
“ last, resolved to open my circumstances to
“ them: they treated me with the same kindness
“ I had ever experienced from them: they took
“ such security as I was able to give them. I
“ could do no more: it was my all. I wished
“ to hide myself from all my former acquaint-
“ tances; and dreaded nothing so much, as be-
“ ing known. I resolved to go to sea, indifferent
“ in what capacity, for any thing was preferable
“ to starving in a jail. I went on board the
“ Gravesend boat, in order to go to Chatham, to
“ enter on board some man of war that was
“ going abroad: I cared not where. I arrived
“ at Gravesend yesterday; and at the house
“ where I was to be taken up by the coach, the
“ landlord asked me if I would purchase those
“ cloaths, which have occasioned this mistake,
“ and given so much trouble. I thought it would
“ forward my scheme of disguising and conceal-
“ ing myself, and accordingly purchased them.
“ The rest you know. To-morrow I have no
“ doubt of being acquitted by the evidence of
“ the man who sold them to me, and then I will
“ pursue my design: desirous rather to encounter
“ any personal difficulties, than suffer as I do
“ from the distracted state of my mind: but
“ such is the rigour of my fate, I must endure
“ both.”

My father encouraged him, when he had finished, by representing, that many things might turn out well for him. I joined in endeavouring to console him. He seemed in despair; and said,
“ He

“ He was in the situation of Milton’s devils, to
“ whom

“ Hope never comes.”

Every thing happened next day as he had said. We went before the justice, where, all parties appeared. The landlord proved his buying the cloaths from a young fellow in his house on the preceding day. Every thing was cleared up to the entire satisfaction of all persons present; and my friend was honourably acquitted. After returning us his thanks in a manner that bespoke his gratitude, and the sense he had of what we had done for him, he begged our permission to depart. We insisted upon his dining with us. “ We shall leave this place after dinner: let me have your company whilst I can, Harry,” said I. With difficulty he consented. We dined. Our servants and chaise waited to carry us to Maidstone, from whence I write this. As it was contrived, a servant remained after us, who put a letter into his hand, mounted, and immediately followed us. I assure you, my dear Simpson, I had no notion of what my father intended to do for Williams when he first saw him at R——, but he entirely drove all the little schemes out of my head, that I was forming for the re-establishment of his affairs before we left it. However, he cannot prevent my adding to his generosity. I do not see any reason, because my father does a good-natured or a worthy action, that I should be ashamed to tell it, because he is my father: the virtues of a father and his children reflect mutual honour on each other. I glory in the goodness of mine. He came into my room early in the morning, pre-

vious to our leaving R——, and Williams's going before the justice a second time. "You are lazy, Charles; rise." I obeyed, and followed him into the garden.

"I am much affected," said he, "with poor Williams's situation; and have been contriving how to serve him."

"I have been employing myself in the same manner, sir."

"I believe, Charles, that I shall succeed best. Read this," said he, putting a letter into my hands, addressed to Williams. It was this:

TO MR. WILLIAMS.

Sir, I esteem myself unfortunate, that it is not in my power at present more effectually to serve you. The enclosed draft on my banker, takes all the cash he has of mine out of his hands; but in a few months, you shall receive another of the same value. You may have occasion for money till you are able to go for it: I hope the smaller bill will supply your necessities till then. Your worth and your sufferings have interested me greatly in your favour; and you may always depend upon finding a sincere friend in

CHARLES HORTON.

The draft on the banker was for 500 l. the bank bill for 10 l.

"You have anticipated, and nobly exceeded me, sir," said I.

"No matter for that, Charles; let us contrive to deliver it to him in such a manner as will not offend his delicacy or sensibility; and that we may not stay to receive his acknowledgments on the occasion."

We

We hit upon this scheme which I have related to you, and it was executed at our departure from R——. And now we are at Maidstone. My father was fatigued, and went to bed: and I sat down to write to you. You will see Williams in town shortly, without doubt: let me know if there is any alteration in him. This affair has kept my attention very much employed; but nevertheless I have found opportunities to get to Elwood. I cannot forget the lovely Harriet. No consideration, employment, or amusement, can prevent her being always present to my imagination. Another day will carry me home. My heart beats with impatience to meet her. I shall be indulged with the favour of kissing her too. Never was I so uneasy at being absent from any woman: what will become of me, if this uneasiness continues? I shall expect to receive a letter from you, when I get home; but could not wait till then to acquaint you with this agreeable turn in Williams's affairs: because I am convinced you will partake in the pleasure it gives both him and me. Adieu. I begin to be sleepy, and consequently dull.

— CHARLES HORTON.

LETTER X.

TO CHARLES HORTON, Esq.

I HAVE received all your letters, young man. They please me in general; particularly the latter. It is the proper province of men of your father's rank and fortune to aid the distressed, and relieve the afflicted. He feels, himself, the happiness he has bestowed: he enjoys the heart-felt and inexpressible satisfaction of knowing he has raised from obscurity and indigence a worthy, friendless, young man: that he has restored to society an useful member: that he has drawn down upon himself the blessings of this object of his bounty: and that the father of all mankind, and the giver of all good gifts, will pay an attention to the prayers of that man, who endeavours to imitate his Maker. How happy are they that have an opportunity of doing good! But how few are there who make use of it! Shameful and scandalous neglect! How much preferable is this worthy action of your father's, to those practised by our modern men of fashion. I read in the news-papers of 1800l. depending on one horse out-running another—1000l. on a main of cocks—6000l. lost by one man, and 10,000l. by another, in one night's sitting at a gaming table. Those who do thus, are insensible to the calls of humanity. I could heartily wish, that there could be some method found out of punishing those, whose rank exempts them from corporal punishment. For instance: I would have an officer established at every one of

of these tables, with sufficient powers to take from every bet that is made at least 15 per cent. to be appropriated to certain charitable uses: that he should have power to levy the sum of one guinea from every person, without exception, for every oath sworn during the course of play: that all bets should be registered at an horse-race or cock-match, or else deemed not valid: and those made in certain exigences, such as 10 to 1, five pounds to a crown on a fallen cock, &c. should be registered upon oath, under certain grievous penalties: in order that a fund might be raised from the folly and idleness of the more villainous part of mankind, to help the worthy, the poor, the necessitous and distressed; to portion off young women; to do a thousand good things that might be done with so large a fund. I would not have private meetings excepted in my regulation. It is only on the rich, the luxurious, and the profligate, I would lay the iron rod of an enormous tax. It would either suppress the spirit of gaming; which is, or ought to be, a disgrace to any country; or, the sums raised, in consequence of some similar restrictions, would answer a number of good ends, and the money of those who have too much to know what to do properly with it.

Should wander, Heav'n-directed, to the poor.

Williams came into the coffee-house yesterday: his brow wore not that dejection which was formerly so conspicuous: his look was serene: his deportment, regular and uniform: he accosted me.

“ When

“Where have you been, Mr. Williams,” said I? “You seem restored to better spirits than when I saw you last.”

“Restored indeed, sir! I am restored to every thing that is valuable in life, by the most worthy, the most generous of men. You seem astonished; but it is true, sir. It is to Sir Thomas Horton and his son I am indebted for every blessing: for liberty: for independence: for happiness.”

“You are much affected, Mr. Williams: take a walk with me.”

I perceived some of the daily impertinents drawing near, to overhear what he said; for he could not contain himself. I wanted to save him the mortification of exposing the honest transports of a grateful heart, to the censure of a parcel of scoundrels that never entertained an honest or a grateful sentiment in their lives. He followed me.

“I thank you for your prudence,” said he, when we had got into the street. “I should have made myself ridiculous to those people; and am much obliged to you for preventing me. I could not help expressing the feelings of my heart. I believe my friend Charles Horton conceals nothing from you, and I do not doubt but he has acquainted you with every thing I have informed him of concerning myself. It will be a pleasure to me if he has. The greatest happiness a man can know, is having a faithful friend, in whom he can repose an unreserved confidence.”

“He has, Mr. Williams; he has interested me very much in your behalf; has informed me of every thing relating to you. He mentioned to me also, that he heard his father
“hint

" hint his intention of doing something for the re-establishment of your affairs."

" He has done it," returned he, " and more nobly than I ever expected or imagined."

He then produced your father's letter. " When I received it," said he, " and saw the contents, I was astonished. I ran after the chaise that carried my benefactors from me, and saw, when almost tired, that it was impossible to overtake it. I returned to the inn; and perused the letter several times, scarcely believing it real. My heart was overwhelmed with gratitude. The prospect that had been so long clouded began to brighten; and I found my hopes and ambition revive. Joy and good fortune, has a much greater effect on me than grief and adversity. I can bear the latter with a sullen courage; but the former totally unhinges me. I slept not all that night: but revolved every thing that had happened, or might happen, in my breast. The next morning I set out in the coach for London, returning thanks to Providence for his care of me. On my arrival, I paid all my debts. The most insolent and overbearing of my creditors, who had threatened my liberty most, and who had insulted me most in my distresses, became most humble, fawning, and willing to ingratiate themselves, when they saw my prosperity. —I have partly informed her whom my soul loves of this change, this unexpected change in my affairs; and promise myself to be happily united to her. When that happens, may I flatter myself with being enlisted in the number of your friends, and that you will do me the honour of admitting me to your intimacy?"

" I don't

“ I don't like compliments, young man ;—
 “ but believe you deserve my friendship, and
 “ you may depend upon it I wish to serve you.”

I am very glad the prospect of happiness returns upon him.—Let me know when your father sends him a supply. I have got a little money by me, that I do not know how to dispose of better than in assisting the worthy. So much for Williams. There are some parts of your letters I do not understand, and shall wait with very great impatience for your explanation of them. Have a care, Horton ; that young woman who is unfortunate enough to be the object of your affection, is, by your own account, most worthy to be loved,—though perhaps your partiality to her may make you describe her more advantageously than she deserves. You know that,

The lip of the nymph we admire,
 Seems for ever adorn'd with a smile.

But do you not look upon the beauties of this young woman, as a robber does on a miser's hoard, which he is determined, at the first opportunity, to destroy, and deprive him of. I fear you do : yet am willing to think the best of your generosity, and the goodness of your heart. She is defenceless : her parents, her natural protectors, are dead. If it is true, as you tell me, that you feel yourself inspired with an honest affection for her, you will support and defend, instead of injuring and destroying her. My heart, which feels for her situation, fears for her danger. That delicate sensibility, shews her temper to be soft, and her mind capable of receiving the tenderest impressions. A false friend
 betrays

betrays her within, an avowed enemy assails her from without: Guard her against yourself, Charles. If you love her, you should be her protector.

Yours, as you demean yourself,

EDWARD SIMPSON.



LETTER XI.

TO EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq;

IF I love her?—Did you offer that supposition?—If you saw me with her, you would not doubt it. I do, my dear Simpson—beyond any thing I ever yet knew. I adore her. The date of this letter will shew you I am returned to Elwood. I flattered myself I saw pleasure in her countenance, and joy sparkle in her eyes, at our coming back again. Perhaps it was only a grateful satisfaction she enjoyed at seeing my father, her benefactor, return to his house in safety again. I have no reason to suppose any thing else. Miss Webster was still with us. The next day was fixed for her departure. We were to accompany her home, and dine with her father. She, Harriet, and I rode. My father and aunt went in the carriage; In good spirits we set out. My charmer was mounted on a favourite mare of my father's. As she is an excellent rider, her manner of sitting her horse added an unspeakable grace

grace to her shape. A fine woman shews to great advantage on horseback, especially if she rides well.—The exercise had added a glow to her countenance, and brightened the vermilion of her cheeks: her eyes seemed to have acquired double lustre. I followed her, with looks of reverence and love; and found my heart almost dissolved in rapture and tenderness.—Attentive only to her, I watched her with an anxiety not to be described.—We did not choose to keep pace with the coach, but cantered on before. Our road lay across a ford, that was swelled with some late rains. By the time we got in the middle of it, we found it much deeper than we expected. My Harriet's mare seemed startled; and unwilling to go forward: the violence of the stream frightened her. I rode up by her side, and endeavoured to coax her forward, but in vain: at last her rider gave her the whip, and she began to plunge and rear in the middle of the water, and threw the dear girl. I was near her, aware of the danger, and was in the stream as soon as she was. She alighted on her feet, though very much frightened. I supported, and waded with her to the opposite side. My old hunter, who waited for me with great composure, and Miss Webster, prevented the mare from running away. I represented to them, that the best thing we could do was to mount again, and make all the haste we possibly could, to the place of our destination. They consented: and we arrived without any further accident at Mr. Webster's. She got a change of dry cloaths from the ladies, and I was furnished from the gentlemens wardrobe. It was the occasion of much merriment, as no disagreeable consequence had ensued. 'Tis true, she was frightened; I was

was not unalarmed: however, my being so near her, and, perhaps, saving her from a terrible fate, gave me much pleasure. My father would not suffer her to ride home: so we went in the coach, and the servants led our horses. We did not forget the adventure, as we crossed the ford in our return. Her expressions of gratitude to me were strong, natural, and unaffected. How I lamented the restraint I was unhappily under, in the presence of my father and aunt, which prevented my taking that opportunity of telling her, that I would sacrifice my life to save her's: to tell her, that I could receive no compensation from the rest of the world, if she was lost to me. My answers, therefore, were constrained, and circumscribed to certain limits; and though polite and general, they did not tell her half my heart.—All I had to do was, to endeavour to see her alone. It was not an easy task. We might be together, perhaps, for a few minutes; but never long enough to open a matter on which my future happiness so much depends. My aunt generally is one of our company in our evening walks: and though the reserve that Harriet first assumed is worn off; yet I cannot say, that I think myself more familiar with her, than I was in a week after I had seen her. Thus matters stand with me at present. Do you think, Simpson, I should take so much trouble about this girl, if I did not love her? I am afraid to speak to her, lest I may offend her;—lest my language may not convey my sentiments as delicately, and as purely as I wish. I can't persuade myself to write to her, yet I want to sound her inclinations. Some lucky moment will unexpectedly bring this affair to an eclaircissement. You shall know when my father sends the remittance to Williams.

I have

I have got some cash by me, which shall be joined to yours, and sent all together under his name; it would oppress the worthy young man's heart to know he was indebted to too many benefactors. I have partly revealed the circumstance to Harriet, of his re-establishment in life; and told her how fortunately we discovered him in his trouble. Transport lightened in her eyes:—She was, she said, (and I believe her) almost as happy as he was, at receiving the account of his being extricated from his troubles. She possesses a most benevolent, humane heart. The virtues of social life reside in it. How happy shall I be, if it is not impossible to inspire it with some tender sentiments towards me! Surely she will not listen to my protestations in vain. When she is thoroughly convinced of the sincerity of my affection, she would perhaps condescend to own I am worthy of her regard. I have not, as yet, tried her; but will by the first opportunity. Farewell. Wish me that success I merit.

Yours truly,

CHARLES HORTON.

L E T.

LETTER XII.

To Miss WEBSTER.

I AM determined to keep my word, you see, my dear Lucy. I promised to write to you once a week, and you have not been gone much longer; and now I am seated to fulfil my promise. What can I say to you? we have lived so very regular till this Mr. Horton came from London, that to give you an account of one day, would be to give an account of the whole year. I confess, this stranger has made some alteration: For though he is sir Thomas's only son, he is a stranger at Elwood: perhaps it would have been much better if he had not come at all, for some of the inhabitants here.—Our time passes more agreeably, 'tis true, when we are in company together: But then we are sometimes alone; and when we are alone, we are apt to indulge our thoughts, let them be proper or not: we cannot avoid thinking. You desired me not to think: but I cannot help it, Lucy; I can do nothing else but think: for now you are gone, I cannot speak. And what do I think about? you will very naturally ask me. The mind of woman, ever prone to contradiction, does that which it ought not to do; and gratifies itself by reflecting on that, which should ever be banished from its recollection. I must write to you. You may scold me; but that will only serve to increase my uneasiness, and render me more unhappy. Why did he come to Elwood? or, rather, why is he so amiable? And, why am I so weak and so foolish?

foolish? Is it a crime to be pleased with seeing a fine prospect? Is it guilt, to be delighted in beholding a most worthy and lovely young man? if it is, Lucy, shun your friend, for she is far gone in the paths of wickedness. But yet, if it is bad in any one, it is ten times more criminal in me. The child of sir Thomas Horton's bounty, I am making use of that beauty which the world says I have, to allure the son of my benefactor to his ruin; to make him forget friends, honour, and fortune, and throw himself away upon me, who know not what I am. 'Tis pride, but 'tis an honest pride, that makes me shun him, and prevent his having an opportunity of telling me a secret his eyes have told me long ago, or I am a very bad interpreter. Were I at liberty to act,—it is most likely I should not treat him in the manner I do at present, with that distance and reserve, that in affecting him, distresses me: but it is a conduct must be pursued, for my own sake: in preserving that propriety of behaviour, I save myself much uneasiness, which I must necessarily suffer if I acted otherwise. 'Tis true, I feel in private, that my public behaviour is constrained; and it affects me strongly. I know not how I so soon learned to disguise the sentiments of my heart, and become so perfect a mistress of the art. Mr. Horton, by several little stratagems, is contriving to get me alone;—and I dread his succeeding: though, to you I must confess, it would not displease me very much.—Yet, nevertheless, I will guard against him as long as I can: who can promise more?—Mine is a difficult task to perform; but Mrs. Allen takes care of me, and seldom suffers me out of her sight. What will

will be the consequence, I know not ; but whatever it is, you shall be informed of it, Lucy. Trouble has been unknown to me since I came into Sir Thomas Horton's family ; but I fear the scene will change soon. Adieu : and let me desire you to write to me sometimes, and to think me

Your ever sincere and affectionate

HARRIET NICOLLS.



L E T T E R X I I I .

To EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq.

NO engineer, neither Cohorn nor Vauban, ever approached a fort more regularly, with more caution, or feared a repulse more, than I do, in making my addresses to this little, innocent country girl. I hardly take a step either, where I do not meet with some unexpected opposition, that my foresight or prudence can neither prevent nor remedy. I am very much mistaken, if she does not understand me perfectly well ; and yet the dread of knowing it for a certainty, keeps her aloof. This is pure undisguised nature. There is not the least atom of coquetry in her behaviour, or I should pay very little regard to her. It is that timid, real modesty and purity, that awes me ; or I should attempt to take the heart by storm, instead

instead of sapping it by so slow a progress. My little assiduities, which appear more the result of complaisance than any thing else, are very agreeable to her. I had a mind to try an experiment;—pretended to be ill, and made my servant bleed me. My complaints were innumerable.—I watched her, and thought a concern was visible in her countenance;—a languor and softness in her eyes, and an attention to me, that exceeded the bounds of common pity. It might be owing to that excessive humanity and benevolence she possesses: but still there was room for me to imagine it was not entirely that. I am willing to flatter myself it is so; as the reality of it would greatly conduce to my happiness. The little offices of kindness she rendered me with my pretended lame arm, gave me infinite delight: she saw it, and continued them. The next morning, I don't know how it was, we both met in the breakfast parlour, before any others of the family were ready to come down. After expressing her hopes of my being better, she asked me how I came to rise so early after my indisposition, which, she said, she imagined had left me, as I looked much better.

“The cause still remains, of which my indisposition yesterday was but an effect. It lodges in my heart, and will destroy me,” said I, with an heavy sigh.

“I hope not, Mr. Horton; you should seek a remedy for it. Is it incurable?”

“I fear it is: but when ever I am cured, it is you, lovely Harriet, who must be my physician.”

“I, Sir!” said she, alternately varying from the colour of the red to that of the white rose.

“Yes;

"Yes; it is a passion for you, Harriet, that drinks my blood, and banishes my peace; and it is only you who can restore it."

"Sir, I did not think you would treat me in this manner; I cannot listen to—"

My father entered the room. She stopped. The pleasure he felt, in seeing me so well recovered, prevented his perceiving the confusion and agitation the dear girl was in: he did not do it immediately: but when she came to pour out the tea, her hand shook so, and her frame was affected with such a trepidation, that she could not hold the teapot. I felt for her at that instant most forcibly, and pitied her from my heart. Mrs. Allen relieved her, and officiated in her room. As soon as breakfast was over, under colour of an headach, she retired to her chamber: the rest of the day she was not able to look me in the face; she scarcely ever lifted up her eyes. I truly underwent, at that time, more pain than she did. I accused myself of being the cause of her uneasiness; and would, had it been in my power, willingly have revoked what I had been saying; but that cannot be, and I must proceed to explain myself further to her. Two days have since elapsed, and she has most cautiously avoided having any thing to say to me. She scarcely will give me an opportunity of looking at her: yet a Mr. Webster, a brother of that young lady's I mentioned to you before, was here yesterday, and she treated him with a familiarity and ease that piqued me exceedingly, and inspired me with some sentiments that were rather disadvantageous to her sincerity. I know not to what cause to attribute it properly: they have been long acquainted, and an intimacy has been long established in the family. Perhaps it is to that it is owing:

owing: but to my jealous fancy it appeared like something more. Shakespear truly says,

A lover's eye will gaze an eagle blind :
His feeling is more soft and sensible
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails.

Adieu, Simpson, and believe me your friend.

CHARLES HORTON.



LETTER XIV.

To Miss WEBSTER.

MY suspicions are verified, my dear Lucy; they are but too well founded. He has communicated a secret to me, that there is but too much reason to fear will be the cause of much uneasiness to us all.—I will tell you how it happened. I was surprized, and neither accessary nor consenting to the occasion that gave opportunity for it. He came down, a few mornings ago, to breakfast, as he pretended, and I thought, really ill. I imagine, Lucy, he was not so truly; but if he was not, he is an excellent hypocrite. I saw, or I thought I saw, his fine eyes dimmed by the malady; their brilliancy was almost extinguished, their vivacity was lost; his countenance was pallid, the roses of his cheeks were faded: he had been bled that morning; a languor assumed the place of that briskness

ness and firmness, with which he seemed particularly endowed, and always moved; his whole frame seemed disordered: his hair, which was intirely *dishabillé*, compleated the appearance of illness, and seemed to claim pity. Need I tell you, that my foolish heart is too susceptible of the tenderest impressions—Alas! too feeling for the happiness or peace of its owner. I immediately took the part of the invalid, and, from pitying his situation, I became most anxious about him, most attentive to him; nor did I perceive what I was about, till the faint gleam of joy, which seemed to reanimate his countenance, told me, that he was delighted with the notice I took of him; and shewed me what I was doing. Perhaps I was too much pleased with the satisfaction I appeared to give him: perhaps it was the fear of being guilty of a greater impropriety in my conduct, if I immediately desisted, that made me continue paying him that regard my humanity first induced me to do. He found himself better in the evening: he seemed to tell me, that I was the occasion of his being so: however, he did not, or would not, seem void of illness or pain. I went to bed, but could not sleep. I rose earlier than usual, and went into the breakfast parlour; and was much surprised, as you may suppose, to see Mr. Horton there before me: his look was much altered for the better: he was well again. I congratulated him on his recovery. He was yet ill, he said, and that I must cure him. He said more: but such was my confusion, that I am sure I cannot tell you what it was; but the purport was such as I feared to know. Sir Thomas coming in, happily relieved me, in one sense of the word, though he served to increase my confusion in another.

other. I imagined myself guilty of a crime, and thought he was acquainted with what his son had said to me. I was in both their presence. It was my province to officiate at the breakfast-table. I attempted to pour out the tea: my hand refused to perform its duty: it trembled so, that the tea-pot would have fallen, if the worthy Mrs. Allen had not perceived my situation, and took it out of my hands.

“What is the matter, my dear Harriet?”

“I have a violent head-ach and swimming in my head, madam.”

“Well, child, I will pour out the tea for you: you had better go and lie down.”

I took her advice. It is impossible to make you sensible of what I suffered when alone. It is but too apparent, that I think better of Mr. Horton than I ought. He would wish to persuade me, that he thinks well of me: but I must not listen to his persuasions; they are fatal,—full of inevitable danger. If they have the weight with me that he wants them to have, I must be deaf to honour and gratitude, and awake only to the calls of a passion that will lead me I know not whither.—I must not reflect. All my business shall be to tell you what passes here, and leave you to guess my situation.—I had recovered myself a little by dinner-time, and came down. He inquired with a tenderness about my health, that pierced to my soul. I was rather better. Chagrin, concern, and mortification, were strongly painted in his face: he appeared very uneasy. I stole a look at him, and he was deeply buried in thought. I could not account for this alteration in him. Your brother William came to see us in the evening. You know, Lucy, that I look upon you as a sister, and
must,

must, therefore, treat him as a brother. Truly glad to see him, as he turned my thoughts, and the conversation, to other objects than they had been engaged on all the day, I was able, from my intimacy with him, to shake off that reserve I was obliged to keep to for my own sake. As my behaviour to him was so different from that which I had shewn to Mr. Horton, he took notice of it: he sat silent and thoughtful, seldom speaking, sighing often: as I appeared more chearful, he was the contrary: he soon left the room, and did not come near us any more, till your brother was just going away. His uneasiness did not seem at all dissipated. I passed an evening at Elwood, for the first time, disagreeably; rather, shall I say, unhappily. The next day Sir Thomas and Mr. Horton went to pay a visit to some of the neighbouring gentlemen, and we were left to ourselves. Mrs. Allen and I had much talk about her beloved nephew: he seems, and I believe really is, worthy to be loved: he is very amiable; has a thousand good qualities; but they are reserved for somebody else, and a happy woman shall possess them in him. I saw him not till the next day: he was respectful, and rather distant; and has behaved himself differently from what he did heretofore, since he spoke to me. Is it, owing to his fear of seeing me reduced to the same situation I formerly was by it, that he abstains from addressing me with his usual familiarity?—or to what else?—I find my heart concerned in his manner of behaving to me, and cannot help taking notice of it. Yesterday he spoke to me as usual: his eyes glistened with transport as he addressed me. I was seated at the harpsicord when he came into the room: Mrs. Allen was with me.

"I am glad to see you sufficiently in spirits to play."

"Do,—oblige us, Harriet," added Mrs. Allen.

I bowed, and complied. Mr. Horton paid me several compliments which I did not deserve; for I never performed worse.

"I hear, Miss Nicolls, that you sometimes do more than play merely; you compose. I am going to beg a favour of you."

"What is it, sir?"

"To set this translation of a little Latin epigram * for me. I have rather paraphrased it, indeed; but suppose the original might have been addressed to a beautiful woman: and this imitation of it may not improperly be offered to you. I am convinced her charms did not exceed yours."

I blushed.

"You are very gallant this morning, nephew. I never heard you say such a pretty thing before. But let us hear what it is."

I offered it to her.

"No, no, Charles, read it yourself."

"I am but a poor poet, madam, and should be ashamed to read my own works."

And he left us directly.

"Come, Harriet," said she, "read it."

I obeyed.—It was as follows:

* The Editor supposes it to have been the following epigram from the Greek, by Buchanan:

Qui te videt beatus est,
Beatior qui te audiet,
Qui basiat semi deus est,
Qui te potitur—est Deus.

HAPPY

HAPPY the youth, who thus can gaze
On all thy charms with wild amaze!
Can view the lustre of thine eyes,
And see thy crimson blushes rise!
Where, on thy snowy swelling breast,
Love points to everlasting rest.

But happier he, who ravish'd hears
Thy voice, the rival of the spheres!
And, as the melting sounds decay,
In bliss ecstatic dies away!
But, Oh! what raptures must he prove,
Who hears thee bless his ardent love!

He's more than mortal, who can sip
Nectareous honey from thy lip;
Can kiss that cheek where roses bloom,
Inhale that breath that sheds perfume,
Beyond the fragrance Saba boasts,
Or spicy gales that fan its coasts.

But he who folds thee in his arms,
And feasts on thy transcendent charms,
With thee the live-long day can toy,
And rove, entranc'd, from joy to joy,
Whose high-wrought transports meet thy love,
Is more supremely bless'd than Jove!

"Very fine, indeed," says Mrs. Allen, as I finished; "I did not think Charles was a writer of verses."

"It is an amusement for a man of taste, who has nothing else to employ himself with, to spend some of his time in writing poetry."

"True, Harriet; but I know Charles does other things, and can employ himself more worthily than in writing poetry."

“ It is an innocent amusement, madam.”

“ It is so, child ; but there are many much better.”

“ What, madam ?”

“ Offices of humanity ; relieving the distressed, comforting the afflicted, and protecting the injured. Suppose an honest man, uninfluenced by his landlord’s authority, should presume to give his vote as his conscience and his sense directed, in opposition to his landlord’s command ; and suppose this man, in consequence of this, has so irritated the brute, that he determines to take that advantage of that superiority over him which our partial and inadequate laws allow him : suppose his cattle have committed some trespass ; suppose he should be some rent in arrear ; and suppose this landlord should tear this hapless wretch from a distracted wife with five children from his business, which was their chief support, and immure him in a jail, for a sum of money so trifling that he would never feel the loss of it ; yet so large, that the unfortunate tradesman is unable, at the moment, to pay it, what from losses, from disappointments, and perhaps from a slackness in trade.—Imagine, if you can, what the poor wife, with an helpless family around her, must feel, crying to her for that bread which her husband’s industry used to yield them, and which she is unable to afford them—yet must hear their unavailing complaints.—Imagine, if you can, such a scene of distress ;—and then suppose a young gentleman in the prime of life, in the spring of joy and pleasure, attending to the woes of this wretched family—after inquiring into the truth of the matter, and finding the unfortunate prisoner’s
“ character

"character to answer the report he had heard
 "made of him, to go, like the bounteous angel
 "of Providence, to relieve worth and honesty,
 "and to raise him from indigence, despair, and
 "solitude, to happiness, and to his family—to re-
 "instate him in his affairs, and to make him inde-
 "pendent :—suppose such a thing should happen,
 "what would you think of it?"

"I can scarcely think a young gentleman of
 "his age would do such a thing—that he could
 "venture to encounter the ridicule of the world,
 "for spending his money so foolishly, when he
 "could employ it to so much better purpose in
 "town—at the card-table, or at hazard."

"I assure you then there is such a one, and I
 "have the happiness to call him nephew too."

"What! Mr. Horton?—If any body would
 "do so generous and so good a deed, I believe he
 "would : he has a soul formed for such benefi-
 "cent actions."—Do not you think so too, Lucy?

I wish this story of him had not been told me :
 I should not then have entertained so good an opi-
 nion of him as I do now. To most women, the
 elegance of his person, the delicacy of his man-
 ners, and, shall I say, the beauty of his face, had
 been sufficient.—I want to be acquainted with the
 sentiments of his heart ; and should not like him
 to be what the apples were to the fallen angels in
 Milton,—fair to the eye, and nothing but ashes
 and bitterness to the taste.—But I rave. What is
 he, what ought he to be, to me? My foolish
 heart claims an interest in him, when I have none.
 Ah! Lucy, Lucy, your predictions are fulfilled.
 I will not think any more of him ; but do you al-
 ways think of your very affectionate,

HARRIET NICOLLS.

LETTER XV.

TO MISS HARRIET NICOLLS.

HOW shall I act, Harriet, my dear friend? You make me the *confidante* of all the secrets of your heart. You need not be ashamed to avow them.—Sentiment, founded on honour and virtue, disgrace not the owner, though they may be the consequences of a foible of the heart. Will you give me leave to call your *tendres* for Mr. Horton by that name? Perhaps I know not how to judge of the force of passions in others, who never experienced them myself; yet, Harriet, while your eyes are dimmed by the veil which affection and prejudice throw over them, mine are open: I can see, with that friendly attention which I have for you, all your proceedings clearly. I think it my duty to give you my advice, and, if possible, warn you to shun any danger you might otherwise encounter. Though you play quadrille so much better than me, yet I have often pointed out to you some errors in your game, that the heat of play, and the desire of winning, made you overlook. The person whose heart is detached from any particular interest, can understand it better, and perceive the consequences that will flow from it more clearly, and much sooner, than the person who is more immediately engaged. We cannot always resist the impulse of our passions; they force us to a certain point: our reason may sometimes be of the party, but in general it is not. The delusion is pleasing; but the removing it, the dispelling it, is painful. We should not suffer ourselves to be led away
too

too far by it.—“ You are moralizing, Lucy ;
“ —you must have some reason for doing so.”
—I have, my sweet friend, and you shall
know my meaning. There is not, I will allow
you, a more amiable young man, a man, from
appearances, more worthy to be loved, than Mr.
Horton. I will confess all his good qualities. But
has he not some bad ones ?—Under those very
fair appearances are not some faults concealed,
that should be known ? You cannot tell, Har-
riet, but there may. You have been acquainted
with him so short a time, that the bright parts of
his character strike you, and you have had no op-
portunity to employ your penetration in finding
out the darker parts. Such there are, or fame
has used him very ill. The world admits his ge-
nerosity, his politeness, his honesty with the
men ; but it says also, that he is, with regard to
women, as great a libertine as ever figured in
the annals of romance : that with them he thinks
his promises are not binding, and a breach of
faith or honour with them is of no sort of con-
sequence. His heart, that might have been for-
merly susceptible of the tenderest passions, is now
grown callous, and his feelings for our sex are
quite destroyed. In short, he is amiable, only to
deceive ; he appears to be every thing that is
lovely, only to betray. Warned of your dan-
ger, my dear Harriet, can you ever fall a prey
to the artifices he may make use of to delude
you ?—you will avoid him, and dread the ser-
pent that lurks under his smiles of fondness, affec-
tion, and humanity. I know that I oppose the
favourite inclination of your heart, in thus cen-
suring the object of its esteem and regard ; but
mine is the part of a friend. I foresee that I
shall incur your displeasure ; but nevertheless can-

not avoid telling you my thoughts, and my suspicions. We did not imagine him so dangerous as he has since proved himself; yet you, in a short time, became pleased with his manners, and delighted with his person——Ah! Harriet, Harriet, take care of him.——I am sure you will acquit me of having any sinister design in thus telling you what is reported of Mr. Horton, or wishing, by that means, to forward my brother's suit; you would do me wrong, if you imagine so. I will confess, that my brother's situation affects me. I cannot hear his sighs, and see the tears of hopeless love pouring from his eyes, without mingling mine with them. Perhaps you will tell me, that you never knew of my brother's regard. You may be right in saying so. I should have revealed that secret to you, which his timidity has prevented his doing himself; but sure, Harriet, you might have learned, from his behaviour, his prepossession in your favour. The arrival of Mr. Horton, with whom you were almost instantly charmed, rendered it unnecessary and useless for me to say a word in the behalf of my poor brother. I have told him, that his attempts to win your heart will be all in vain; yet he persists, and will not give up the pursuit.—I have scribbled my paper out, and have scarce room to add, that I am, with great truth and sincerity,

Your affectionate

L. WEBSTER.

L E T.

L E T T E R X V I .

TO EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq.

I HAVE at last, with much trouble, and the expence of a great deal of time, compleated something like an account of myself. I send it to you;—and blush with shame, believe me, on the perusal of it, to think that I cannot give a better history of myself. I submit it to you:—not the friend of my foibles, but my Mentor, my worthy unbiassed monitor. Ah! Simpson, self-condemnation generally treads on the heels of folly. I have felt, I feel it now. Yet there may be one excuse made for me: my youth—the power of the temptation—and the weakness of the resistance in me.—But I have, perhaps, imbibed wrong principles, and drawn false conclusions: if so, my days will be embittered by the reflection, that I have only prejudiced myself in the course of pleasures, which, in the moment of enjoyment, seemed to be only replete with happiness and transport. Let me hasten to the recital of facts, which, while they support opinions that I have ever maintained, and will convince you, in some measure, of the justice of them, yet I am assured they will meet your reprehension: one circumstance is, I never communicated them to any body else.

My tutor dying when I was near twelve years old, and my father being obliged to go abroad on some public occasion, I was sent to the house of Mr. Harris, a clergyman, who had a certain number of young gentlemen in his care for their education.

education. He at first proposed taking only a fixed number ; but having some offers from the people of the town that were advantageous, his avarice tempted him to enlarge his plan, and his school soon became very numerous. More occupied than usual with the business of tuition, and less attentive than formerly to the care of his family, and his domestic concerns, they were left entirely to his wife. He was a middle-aged, and not a disagreeable man. She was much younger than him ;—of a sprightly temper, handsome and witty, and consequently she made her husband know that she was born to command, and he to obey. They had been married some years, and had one child, whom they both appeared to be very fond of ; the father, I believe, was really so. In this family I approached my fifteenth year, was lusty for my age, spirited as a young roe, and as innocent too. With a bloom of unimpaired health, with a strength and activity uncommon to boys of my age, I became the favourite of both Mr. Harris and his wife.—I knew he frequently indulged a very blameable partiality to some particular boys, and I had reason to suppose myself one of them ; but as she seemed to pay a general attention to them all, and never appeared to do more for one than another, I was at a loss to account for her extraordinary kindness to me ; nor did I at first take much notice of it, as she always took me along with her, when she went out upon any necessary business that related to the family. This became habitual, and was not minded. They had a little country-house, at a small distance from the town : thither the boarders used frequently to go, and thither I was frequently taken by Mrs. Harris, without any other company, upon some pretended

tended business or other. There was a garden, where I was allowed to indulge myself, and had all the fruit I wished: a tempting and agreeable circumstance for a boy.—It was a variety, it was a relief from the exercises of a school, and it was a very grateful partiality to me;—permitted to go there as often as I pleased, as Mrs. Harris was my companion, I never failed to take advantage of that permission. I soon attained my sixteenth year, still the favourite of my tutor and his wife. One day, in the beginning of the summer, I accompanied her to her country-house. She went into the house; I strolled about the gardens, till I grew tired.—I left them, and went into the parlour, where Mrs. Harris was accustomed to be. She was there, indeed, and reclined on a sofa,—in such an attitude!—My glowing imagination represents it to me at this moment—so strong and so lasting an effect it had on me.—The heat, she said, was excessive. I replied, it was warm.—I reddened, and grew pale, and underwent sensations, and felt uneasinesses, I never had experienced before. Why should I not?—She had thrown herself upon the couch in such a posture, that discovered beauties to me I had never seen, or hardly ever thought of before.—The elegant turn of her limbs, which were carelessly exposed!—the voluptuous pantings of a bosom, white as the plumage of the swan!—the turn of her countenance, smiling and inviting!—the tone of her voice, insinuating and tender!—all conspired to teach me a lesson I could never have learned from her husband.

“It is very hot, indeed, madam.”—I turned, and was going out again.

“Stay

"Stay, Horton," said she, "you had better not go into the sun again. Sit down by me for a little while."

I drew near her, more in the state of a malefactor going to the gallows, than a man who had pleasures prepared for his acceptance, and, in the fullness of their abundant growth, only waited for his hand to pluck them. I sat down by her. She took my hand between hers. Her touch thrilled through my blood—it pierced to my marrow. I cast my eyes on the ground, timid, bashful, and trembling; afraid to look up, much more to look her in the face: I was a conquest that this guilty woman wished. To triumph over the modest innocence of a boy, was glory to her. I know not what my thoughts were: they were confused, and I was in a reverie. She quickly drew me from it: I found my hand on her bosom: I can go no further: let it suffice to say, that she succeeded, and I was plunged in guilt. On my return home, I was taken up with the thoughts of the appearance I should make before the injured husband, whom I represented to myself as acquainted with the whole transaction, and prepared to take that vengeance on me which the polluter of his bed had drawn upon himself. As it was the first time I had ever experienced the bewitching sensations of pleasure, so it was also the first time I had ever experienced the poignant stings of remorse arising from conscious guilt: equally forcible, they made a lasting impression on me. I was no longer the gay, the spirited boy, that was the life of every thing. Confused! guilty! abashed! I could not lift my eyes up; had no longer that front of bold open honesty, the companion of untainted integrity. Mrs. Harris perceived my situation: more artful,
and

and more versed in the human heart, she noticed the emotions of mine. She had, perhaps, trod the same road before; and she soon lent me her assistance to get out of it. She re-inspired me with confidence: the secrecy of our connexion—the want of suspicion in her husband—and, above all, a continuance of pleasure, soon restored me, as I thought, to myself: I was happy and secure; and that banished all troublesome and disagreeable thoughts. The first approach of vice is hideous, and the form is frightful, but we soon reconcile ourselves to it. I began to entertain a relish for the pleasures that Mrs. Harris had first given me a notion of; a pretty maid in the house, attracted my notice. The liberty I had of doing almost what I pleased, gave me an opportunity of seeing her frequently. I changed situations; and, from the tempted, became the tempter. Nothing alters the manners and notions of a man so much, as his connexions with women. I left those amusements that my companions delighted in, to themselves:—had nobler sport in view—and therefore I deserted them. The maid had either more real or apparent virtue than her mistress. Some freedoms I had taken with her, caused her to apply to be discharged. “What was the reason she wanted to go away?” —“She could not stay for master Horton,” that was a sufficient reason: and it was not the girl’s wish so much, as it was her mistress’s inclination, that she should be discharged.—I was first acquainted of this step by Mrs. Harris herself. We were alone in the afternoon. She wanted something.

“I will go and call Nanny, Madam.”

“Ah, Horton, you are very ready to call her: don’t you think her a pretty girl?”

The

The question so *mal a propos*, brought the blood into my face.

"I see your thoughts" continued she, "and know that you wished to be acquainted with her beauties: but I have removed her innocence to a place of safety, where she may be secure from your pursuits—She is gone from hence."

"Gone, madam!"

"Yes, gone, sir. Because I fell a victim to your passion and your charms, do you suppose that every other woman you see must do so too? No, I had the mortification to hear her tell me what seducing things you had said to her, which I found to be the same you had formerly made use of so successfully to me, when I was weak enough to believe them true. Ah Horton," said she, letting fall a shower of tears, "is this the recompence I merit for sacrificing every thing to you? my duty—my honour—myself."

Her situation alarmed me. I flew to comfort her, and supposed I had earned the reproaches she was about to bestow on me. My attempts to console her were successful; and, by vowing an eternal fidelity to her, restored her tranquillity. However, I found she had turned the tables upon me, and had thrown all the guilt of seduction upon me, instead of taking it upon herself. That, however, I did not regard. I still enjoyed the same familiarity and pleasures; and did not much care upon what terms. Mr. Harris's death, which happened some months after, put an end to our connexions. I went to the university: she retired to some relations. We parted more unconcernedly than I expected. I had been tired of her some time; and she was even with me: for she had cast the eye of affection upon an usher,

usher, who had taken care of Mr. Harris's business during his illness: a lusty, muscular, florid man; and, as I afterwards learned, she married him.

This first inroad into the regions of gallantry, only set me a wishing to continue in them: it gratified my vanity, and indulged my passions. On my arrival at the university, I was not the bashful novice that I might be supposed from my youth and my situation: on the contrary, I was versed in the mystery of intrigue: expert in contrivances: *adroit* in extricating myself from difficulties: wary, prudent, and vigilant.—To Mrs. Harris I was indebted for the perfection to which I arrived in the science of modern love: for I had frequently been put to my shifts to escape the notice of the husband, or the servants, and to avoid giving my companions any suspicion of me during the continuance of my *amour* with her.—As a new world was opened to me, I enjoyed it with the more satisfaction, because I knew how to behave in it. I joined not with the foolish set, that fluttered about every shewy woman who was to be seen: more secret, and more sure of success, I enjoyed privately in reality, what they were so industrious to obtain only the appearance of in public. A constant attendant of the softer sex, I soon made myself remarkable and consequential amongst them: pleasure was my view, my design, and my business. A general lover is despised on all hands: it was necessary I should attach myself to one person. The pretty daughter of a farmer at some distance, was the object I pitched upon. To a lovely face, were added the charms of native innocence: to a fine, elegantly turned person, the natural graces of ease, and a genteel carriage, were joined.

joined. I met her at the assembly, and danced with her. She delighted me. I behaved with the most interesting particularity to her: she seemed pleased with it. I appointed to meet her there the next assembly: she consented; but, in the mean time, asked permission, and obtained it, to pay her a visit. I went to see her at her father's, who was a man of a small fortune, and farmed most of his land himself: had two daughters, one of whom was married; and this, the youngest, yet remained at home with him, and single. I was received with cordiality by the old man, and with politeness and pleasure by his daughter. We agreed to dance together again at the next assembly: and we seemed to part mutually pleased with each other. Tho' I at first saw, very nearly, how far this attachment might lead me, my determination was, only to go to such a point. Acquit me of having any notion of seducing her innocence, or profiting by any partiality she might have conceived for me, in order to ruin her. I had no notion of marrying her, 'tis true; but, at the same time, had too much respect for her, to think of injuring her.—What then could be the motives for my endeavouring to contract an intimacy with her, and to wish to make her think well of me? I cannot answer that question. It is perhaps a vanity that young men possess: they like to see themselves noticed by the women; and, for that purpose, strive to make themselves agreeable in their eyes. Without intending any mischief, they do a great deal: they, perhaps, win the affections of a young girl, who is led to imagine that the civilities that are paid her proceed from a sincere and honourable passion. She indulges her hopes, and forms wishes that will never be gratified:

gratified: she fixes her inclinations upon one beloved object. Great to the voice of prudence: and tho', as the case is generally, she is forsaken for some new face, she refuses an husband that a parent provides, and whom, had not the other temptation fallen in her way, she might have thought well of. Perhaps she is forced to marry, and is unhappy all the rest of her life. This is a melancholy consequence, arising from the desire of trifling with a girl; and I must confess to you, I had no other design: but it was attended, at that juncture, with very different consequences to me. The night of the assembly arrived: I was dressed: and, with a very natural impatience, waited the arrival of my partner. She delayed coming. In the mean time, among other ladies, a Mrs. L—— arrived. I knew her. She singled me out from a crowd of people who were paying their devoirs to her, and I approached her.

“Are you engaged to-night, Mr. Horton?”

“I am, Madam.”

“To whom, pray, Sir?”

“To the amiable little partner I danced with the last night.” She threw a most contemptuous sneer at me.

“Here she comes.” She then entered the room. I left Mrs. L—— to pay my compliments to her.

You will want to know who Mrs. L—— was. She was the wife of one of the principal tradesmen in the town; had some pretensions to family; and had received a good education, which she displayed to the best advantage: had a good person, an agreeable face: sang well, and always preserved that superiority which she thought herself intitled to from her rank: when she gave her

her hand to Mr. T——, she imagined she conferred a favour on him; and the longer they lived together, the more he was convinced that she thought so, tho' he had never entertained any such notion. She brought him a small fortune, which, added to her other perfections, put her above the level of the rest of the town's people. He was opulent and hospitable; she was vain and shewy; and they generally had company at all hours. After his business was a little dispatched, he used to retire to a tavern, and smoke a pipe with his companions, where he regained that independence and consequence his wife deprived him of at home: then she reigned. 'Tis true, she took frequent opportunities of exposing her husband's want of sense, or politeness, or taste, or something or other, to her own great glory, and his mortification. But this was a divided sway: there was an appearance of a colleague in the government, tho', in reality, it was a monarchy. I mentioned before, that they had a great deal of company;—some attracted by the husband's good living, others by a desire of doing him a favour with his wife. The women, tho' they envied and hated her, used to pretend a friendship to her, and visited her, because it was the only private place of amusement and dissipation. Mrs. L——, among her numerous guests, had some favourites: I soon became one;—was an assiduous admirer; watched every opportunity of making myself agreeable, and even necessary. She was a conquest worth the trouble of gaining; and I had the great satisfaction of triumphing over some of my rivals, who had heretofore flattered themselves with being in her good graces. I waited the developement of her character with great patience: she

she was vain of her family : I allowed her the merit of it, and spoke of her competitors as of people who had sprung from nothing. Fond of disputation and argument, as the field where she had an opportunity of displaying her superior parts, she was eternally contending on some point of consequence : she cared not in what science, or on what subject. If I argued with her, I gave up the cause with a faint resistance : she admired my discernment. Others, who were more tenacious of their opinions, frequently lost the footing they had with her, by obstinately adhering to their notions in opposition to hers : my judgment, whenever I was appealed to, went hand in hand with hers. She affected a taste and politeness : I owned she had a most refined taste, and a perfect rectitude of behaviour. But do not imagine, that she was to be ensnared by a profusion of compliments : she was shrewd and sensible in most things, where she was not concerned herself ; and, tho' she was pleased with compliments of any kind, yet I found that those who flattered her most grossly, did not always succeed best with her. She liked that delicate preference which a man, who knows what he is about, would pay to all her words and actions. She was about thirty. I had dangled about her so long, that I at last began to form wishes I had no conception of at first. I flattered myself also, that the enjoyment of my hopes was not at a very great distance. She was always particular to me, and I always met a good reception from her. But imagining that she intended to play another humble servant of hers against me one day, it alarmed me ; and I could not bear to be forsaken first. The farmer's daughter came in my way : she was handsomer and younger than

than Mrs. L——: I determined to avenge myself, I danced with her, and gallanted her. Tho' Mrs. L—— was just bursting with rage and jealousy, I continued my attention to her rival; and took care to call but once at her house between the assemblies; and then she could only accuse me with her eyes. My scheme was in a fair way: and my perseverance in it only could ensure my success. I determined to be more assiduous than usual in my civilities to my partner: she perceived it, and strove in vain to hide her concern. She requested of me to dance a minuet with her: the hand she gave me to lead her off, shook so violently, that I could scarce hold it: she happened to stand next to me in the arrangement for the country dances: she made several efforts to speak to me: I took no notice of them.—I was too agreeably engaged. My partner was tired, and sat down.—Mrs. L——seized me.

“Is it thus you treat me, Horton?—are you not a traitor?”

“No, Madam. You first taught me to deceive: but you are not to blame.—Mr. Johnson's charms were too powerful.”

“I despise him,” said she. “Come to me To-morrow evening at seven.—I shall be at home, and alone—Then you may let me know what satisfaction you require from me.”

“I will be punctual.”

The matter was now settled: I had no more to manage. Galled to the heart at the preference I gave to the beautiful and simple country girl, she knew that she had intended to have played me a trick, and found it retorted on herself. I should have undone her fame, her honour would have perished, had I deserted her. She did not choose to give me up: and the greatest concession

concession she could make, was only powerful to recal me. We were the rest of the evening upon the most friendly terms. She displayed herself in the most winning manner: she was all softness: and prided herself on her triumph, as she found she had power to call my attention from my partner, and fix it on herself alone. She could not contain herself: her joy enlivened her, it glistened in her eyes, it animated her whole frame. As she was going out, when the company broke up, I found an opportunity to whisper her, "Remember seven."—"I will." Need I tell you that I was punctual? She received me with a sullen pride.

"Mr. Horton, I am glad to see you."

"It was the desire to see you, Madam, and see you well and happy, that brought me here."

"I suppose you imagine then, that you bring me happiness."

"If I do not entirely, it is to be hoped that I may be able to contribute to it."

"Yes, by making me a sacrifice to the vanity and impertinence of that chit you were so fond of."

"You know, and you have found it, Mrs. L——, that it is in your power to attach me entirely to yourself: not till I had seen those eyes look more favourably on another than on me, did I ever think of paying those addresses, or offering up those vows, any where else, which I owned to be your right alone."

"Ah, perfidious! what security can I have for that, when I have so lately seen you—"

"You have one method of securing me—by delivering up yourself to me."

"That

“ That is too dangerous an experiment to make upon this occasion.”

“ Then you only are in doubt of the power of those charms which all the rest of the world acknowledges, and which I most truly am sensible of. It is your kindness only can fix a lover. Let him know that it is in vain to rove for beauties elsewhere, when he can find such an inexhaustible store of pleasure in you.”

I seized her hand, and fastened my lips to hers. Her wish to secure me had drowned all other reflections: her victory over me was absolute, and I was ranked amongst her slaves. This is odd language: but it was my situation. Jealous, impetuous, haughty, she watched every look, every motion; and according to her capricious fancy she construed every gesture, every turn of mine. She had devoted herself entirely to the guidance of her passion, and it sometimes rendered us both miserable. In the softer hours of retirement, she would throw aside that imperious air, and give a loose to pleasure. Witty and lively, she was perpetually changing her temper and her manner; and was always pleasing. Thus she continued the enchantment in private, that her behaviour, in public, would otherwise soon have dissolved. It is the question of a celebrated author, “ Why are virtuous women always less witty than such as are not so?” Perhaps it is impossible to tell: perhaps it is, because as they have confined their inclinations and passions within certain bounds, their notions and sentiments are circumscribed also; and the timidity and modesty which ever attend a virtuous woman, will not permit her to explain those sentiments, even should they not be so restricted. I continued this correspondence some time, secure and undiscovered.

undiscovered. A summons from my father appointed me to meet him in London on an appointed day : I was not sorry for it ; for I began to feel the weight of my chains, and was in hopes I should get rid of my engagement ; but I was deceived. A woman is not to be easily circumvented, or diverted from her favourite pursuits. With an apparent grief I acquainted Mrs. L—— with the news of my departure. “ I am going to be deprived of happiness and you,” said I. “ An order from my father requires me to quit the university, and prepare to go abroad. Cruel summons ! We shall be separated perhaps for ever.”

“ Not yet,” said she. “ I will remain with you till the last moment. I have not been in London for some months, and will take this opportunity of going along with you. Mr. L—— will consent to it, I am sure ; but that shall give me very little trouble : whether he does or does not, depend upon me for the companion of your journey, at least to London.”

It was as she said. Unawed by the apprehension of censure or reproach, she set off with me : one post-chaise contained us. It was near night when we departed, and intended to go but one stage. I was obliged to praise Mrs. L——’s scheme to come along with me ; but she was not then the agreeable companion she had been. I was not long at the inn, where we took up our quarters, before I was called out.

“ Who can want me ?”

“ A person in the next room desires to see you.”

I was ushered in. It was a female: she was standing with her back to me: her shape was easy and genteel.

"Have you any commands for me, madam?" She made no answer.

"I am afraid, madam, the servant has made a mistake: I am not the person you want."

"You are, sir," said she, turning about, and discovering to me the farmer's daughter I have already mentioned. It was her: but how altered from what she was! The lustre of her eyes was dimmed; the roses of her cheeks were faded; she was pale and wan; as she spoke, she trembled; and was in such agitation she could scarcely stand. "The servant has not made any mistake, sir."

"To what happy accident am I indebted for this favour?"

"To no accident; it was design brought me hither."

"That is still better. In what can I serve you? Or how came you to know I was here?" I took her hand, and led her to a chair.

"I was informed of your intention of stopping here, and came on purpose to see you—to see you for the last time, perhaps."

Her tears interrupted her speech. I was much affected; and pressed her hand, which I still retained, to my lips.

"My dear Miss Cooper you speak riddles to me: explain yourself."

"Perhaps you will despise me when I do, but I care not; I have taken this step, however imprudent, to gratify a passion which I have in vain endeavoured to conquer. You see me the martyr to a fatal inclination: you were too

“ too agreeable to me for my peace : you were
“ too partial and particular to me for your ho-
“ nour. I saw you gave me up as a sacrifice to
“ Mrs. L——. You were happy with her. I
“ saw, with silent grief, that those hopes I had
“ once formed of being dear and pleasing to you,
“ were now no more. Yet such was my folly,
“ and such the force of the delusion, that I could
“ not forbear thinking that you would, at some
“ time or another, return to me. It is true,
“ you never told me you loved me : I have no-
“ thing to accuse you of. But I fancied I read
“ the passion in your eyes, and in the manner in
“ which you addressed me ; it was but fancy,
“ and I am the victim of a too sanguine imagi-
“ nation : I determined never to go to ——
“ again while you were there ; and was resolved
“ never to be a witness of the guilty triumph of
“ the woman who has your heart. I contrived
“ to be acquainted with your motions, and of
“ your intended departure. I came to a relati-
“ on’s in this neighbourhood, under pretence of
“ staying with him for a short time ; but, in
“ reality, to have an opportunity of seeing you
“ once more before you go abroad, and perhaps
“ for the last time. In taking this step, I have
“ relinquished the decorum, I might have almost
“ said, the modesty of my sex : but I could not
“ resist the desire I had to see you. I know that
“ Mrs. L—— is along with you ; that you love
“ her ; and will, perhaps, despise me for this
“ confession I have been making : but the altera-
“ tion in my person, which I see you have ob-
“ served, will very sufficiently vouch the truth
“ of what I say. I will detain you no longer, or
“ prevent her from enjoying the happiness of
“ your company, which is the only thing I envy
E 2 “ her :

“ her : farewell, Mr. Horton. Let my example warn you, in your future life, to avoid making a poor girl eternally miserable, just to gratify an idle vanity, or to fill up half an hour that you could not divert away otherwise.”

She was going. I held her fast, and forced her to sit down.

“ You shall not go, dear Sally, till you hear my justification; tho’ I have hardly any thing to say in my own defence. Your charge is brought against me too truly, and too strongly, for me to deny, or even to extenuate my guilt. I, at this moment, very sincerely lament the consequences of that ill-judged partiality of which you so justly complain. You had reason to think, that my attention to you arose from a passion that you were always capable of inspiring: I have deceived you, and am most penitent for it: were it in my power to make you that recompence you so much deserve for the ills I have brought on you, I would do it; but, in the situation of my affairs, it is totally impossible: you do me wrong, when you suppose Mrs. L—— is in the possession of my heart. I despise and detest her. Not so much the choice of her heart, as the slave of her pride, she sacrifices every thing to me, to keep me so: and it gratifies her vanity, to shew my chains to the world, and her power over me. I am going abroad, it is true; and am not more pleased at any circumstance, that may attend my leaving this kingdom, than in shaking off a yoke, which is irksome and troublesome to me.”

“ You go alone, then?”

“ I do.”

“ That

“ That is one satisfaction: that while I am forbidden to go with you, Mrs. L—— does not accompany you.”

“ I assure you she does not, Sally: and I have too great a respect for innocence and virtue, to think amiss of you. They are too sacred to jest with: instead of taking that advantage of your prejudice in my favour, I, who have been unhappily, though innocently and unintentionally, the cause of your misfortunes in this respect, will become your guardian and protector. In the room of that affection, which is so truly your due, I will substitute the purest friendship. Never shall you apply to me, that I will not serve you in every shape that may be in my power. Return to your father, my dear Sally: cheer his old age; be the comfort of his declining years; return to him, the virtuous and innocent child of his bosom. Instead of throwing temptations in your way, it shall be my task to remove them. Mrs. L—— sought me: at the same time she defied me. We both gratified our passions. She was entrapped in the snares she laid: her affection for me, erected on the worst foundation, will soon be no more. It began with guilt, it ends with disgust and hatred. She is more the object of your pity and compassion, than your envy. Let me then, once more, entreat you to return to your father. His parental tenderness shall choose you a faithful and worthy partaker of your heart, who shall crown your days with joy, and bless you.”

“ I could have listened to you longer, Mr. Horton, had you not mentioned that. You are a stranger to my heart, and my resolution.

“ —No—never will I—but it does not signify
“ —I will return to my father, because it is your
“ request—though every place is indifferent to
“ me, where you are not. I go, to prove my-
“ self worthy of your friendship, though not of
“ your love—Farewell.”

I pressed her to my bosom. Her tears wetted my cheeks as I embraced her: mine mingled with them. I asked her how far she had to go to her relation's.

“ Half a mile.”

“ I will be thy safeguard thither, Sally.”

I saw her to her residence. The situation of the poor girl affected me very much. I felt every tender sensation of pity in my bosom rise to take her part. I returned to Mrs. L——. Melted into softness and tenderness myself, I expected she might have been in the same situation. When I saw her, I apologized for my absence—a matter of business—and threw myself into a chair, buried in thought. She spoke not; and I was roused from my reverie, by being informed the supper was on the table. I sat down,—but had no appetite. Mrs. L—— pressed me to eat in vain; I could not. There was something in her air and manner, so foreign to the simplicity and honesty with which Sally Cooper addressed me, that I could not suffer my heart to make a comparison between them. Her requests appeared to have the force of commands: her desire to see me pleased, I thought an exaction on my good humour; and my thoughts were turned from her, to the scene I had just been an actor in. I commended and applauded myself for my resolution, and my honesty. It was possible and probable, that had I used any entreaties, I should have been
able

able to have taken her along with me, instead of Mrs. L——: but then I should have rendered her future life miserable, and planted a thorn in my own breast, that would have torn my heart to pieces to eradicate. The more I was satisfied with my own proceedings, the more I pitied and loved the character of poor Sally; the more I detested the art and cunning of Mrs. L——. She constrained herself, though with difficulty, before the attendants—They were hardly out of the room, when she began.

“ You are low-spirited this evening, Mr. Horton.”

“ I am.”

“ You are not ill, I hope.”

“ No.”

“ Nothing has happened to ruffle your temper, or make you uneasy.”

“ Humph—No.”

“ Short and pithy. You do not seem pleased or happy.”

“ I am not.”

“ You answer strangely.”

“ I answer truly.”

“ Perhaps other company might be more agreeable to you, than mine.”

“ It is very likely.”

“ Then, sir, you may go to them.”

“ I wish I could.”

“ You wish!—good heaven—do you listen to the perfidious villain!—Sir, it is not for a woman of my birth, family, education, and qualifications, to be treated thus.”

“ You only fancy, madam, that you are treated ill.”

“ I know I am so really, sir; especially when you give a preference to such huffies.”

"I am at a loss to understand you, madam."

"Thou cool, temperate traitor! do not imagine I am so blind, or so foolish, as not to know where you have been so long a time, or with whom you have been. That idle slut shall know, and feel my vengeance; and learn, that Sally Cooper shall never dare to pretend to rival me."

"You must not speak so ill of my friends, madam."—I rang the bell violently.—"I have a very great regard for Sally Cooper's character, madam, and cannot bear to hear any body speak ill of her: she is a good girl."—My servant appeared.—"Order a post-chaise instantly, and get ready to go away in ten minutes."

"Are you in earnest, sir?"

"I am, madam. I have borne this treatment as long as I could: your reign is at an end. I have endured your tyranny too long, not to wish myself free. In ten minutes we part."

I never before experienced

* —quid furens femina possit.

Neither can I now describe it to you. She in vain assumed the fury: I was cool and undaunted. The woman's last and most powerful resource was then made use of: she burst into tears and lamentations. Her tears fell in vain; her complaints were unheeded; the chaise was ready; Frank was prepared.

* What an enraged woman is capable of doing.

"You

“ You now see me for the last time, madam.
“ I have treated you even till this moment, with
“ the utmost generosity. You may return to
“ — again, with the honour of having left
“ me. I shall not be in the way to contradict
“ the report, or impede your conquests, I am
“ now—”

“ Insolent slave! You know your power over
“ me, and attempt to make use of it. It is your
“ turn now: it will be mine hereafter.

“ Never, madam: good night to you.”

I quitted the room, whipped into the chaise, and went post to London. I left the forsaken Statira to deplore her conduct, and learn to treat her next lover with more fondness, and less caprice. London was the theatre, where a more unconfined scene of gallantry might be acted, and pass more unnoticed.

It would take up too much of your time, to recount the particulars of the many engagements I was forced into. I found women every where the same. The same passions were the spring of all their actions, whether in country or in town. One only adventure, of the many that happened to me here, do I think necessary to relate to you. My father chose to have me lodge in the same house with him, while he stayed in London. It was in a public street. I observed a lady of a striking figure, who was eternally planted in a window exactly opposite ours, frequently fix her eyes upon me, for a long time together. I one day bowed to her: she returned my salute: It was a signal for an engagement. She was handsome, and young; and I did not decline the combat. She put on her hat and cloak: she came to the window, and shewed herself in that dress;

and immediately went out. Before she had got to the end of the street, I followed her. When we had escaped the observation of our respective houses, I made a shift to overtake her. Little ceremony suffices, to bring two people together who have a mind to be acquainted. We soon entered into conversation. The laughter-loving dame never was a greater devotee to pleasure, than she was. The preliminaries were not long; nor did they take up much time in adjusting. We settled matters very easily; and I had a *petit souper* with her that night. However, it was held necessary, that she should remove from the place she then was at, as well to escape the remarks that might have been made upon her conduct by her own servants, as to save me the trouble of telling my father a falsehood, to screen my connexions with her; who lived so near that it was next to an impossibility to suppose he would not perceive our intimacy. Every thing about her had the face of Wealth and affluence: I knew not what to make of her. She did not keep me long in suspense. Her husband, she told me, was a merchant, who was then abroad in order to settle some accounts, that had been left in great confusion by the death of one of his correspondents: he had left her in the country with some of his friends: that she liked the amusements of London, and had come up to stay for some time: that while I remained in town, she should have no thoughts of returning. This explained every thing; and I found it more necessary than ever that she should retire to some place of secrecy. I liked her: and pursued my pleasures with security and economy. A lodging was taken at a small distance from town: and at night, my trusty

trusty Frank and I used to go out there armed, to prevent any accidents. This was carried on for some time with great pleasure on both sides: if I had any thing to complain of, it was, that she was too fond. Though perhaps I did not quit her till two or three o'clock in the morning, yet I found, when I went to the coffee-house, two, or sometimes more billets, expressing her desire to see me again, and filled with all the childish uneasinesses of an infant passion. I submitted, however, with a good grace; and took as a mark of her affection, her writing so frequently. One morning, returning home from her, through a very unfrequented part of the town, or rather in the very outskirts of it, I heard a noise, as I thought, of people fighting. I redoubled my pace, and found it was the clashing of swords. I made up directly to the combatants, and found a gentleman defending himself from four men who had attacked him. I immediately rushed in to his relief; and Frank coming up at the same time, we dispersed three of the rogues, but the fourth was so much stunned and wounded with a blow he had received, he could not stir.—We secured him. I turned to the person who was in danger.

“I hope, sir, you have received no hurt.”

“But trifling. What reward do you expect for this service you have done me?”

“None, but the pleasure I receive in doing my duty: I have done nothing more by you.”

“That’s very disinterested. I did not know but you might have been of the same class with those whom you have just now defeated, and driven them from their prey, only for the purpose of securing it to yourselves. But perhaps you may be trusted—What are you?”

“A gentleman.”

"A gentleman."

"I will not doubt it. Are you hurt?"

"No."

"Come with me then—you had better let that fellow go—He is one of the honestest men of society—He openly avows his design to cut your throat—he should be let loose to punish more private thieves."

We let him go. The stranger walked on with such an amazing swiftness, I could scarcely keep pace with him. In reply to my asking him how he came to be out so late at that part of the town,—He answered, "he had been taking a walk, and was returning to dinner."

"To dinner, sir! it is past two in the morning."

"I know it. Your curiosity will soon be satisfied."

I followed him in silence, not doubting but he was disordered in his senses. He stopped at the door of a genteel house, in one of the most private and detached streets: he knocked at the door, a voice demanded who was there? he answered, Beelzebub. The door opened. He went in: we followed him. The parlour, into which we were introduced, was an elegant room, as well furnished as could be: a cloth was laid with one cover, and every preparation for eating.

"That young man is your servant."

"He is."

"Then go down to the kitchen," said he to Frank; "but, as you value your own safety, ask no questions: if you do, you will not be answered, and will incur my displeasure."

Frank bowed, and obeyed him; and I suppose wished himself out of the house very heartily.

When

When we were alone, he threw off that air of fierceness and reserve: he approached, and took me by the hand: he addressed himself to me with a politeness that was the result of a knowledge of the world, and an intimate acquaintance with men and things: he thanked me for the assistance I had lent him, which he owned he did not expect from any man. "I thank you," added he, "not so much for saving my life, as preventing my being maimed, and perhaps rendered a cripple, or deformed. Sit down. I see that my manner of addressing you at first has raised your curiosity: the extraordinary life you see me lead, has not abated it. For the services you have rendered me, I will satisfy you;—but not this night. You shall drink a glass of wine with me." He rang: his servant came up: he wrote upon a piece of paper what he wanted. His dinner was ready: it was served up. He eat heartily. His servant attended him by signs: not a word was spoken. He invited me to partake: I had no appetite. The table was cleared, and a bottle of excellent claret was placed before us.

"I see you are surprized, sir; but this is the way I live in."

"I confess, sir, I am very much surprized; and shall hold myself greatly indebted to you, to explain the cause of your living thus, as you hinted you would."

"You may depend upon it I will—I never deceive, never utter a falsehood. I shall break—fast between eight and nine o'clock to-morrow night, and will give orders for your admittance: I will then tell you the reason why I lead this life. I never wish to see daylight,—but am obliged to do it in the summer season; there—fore

"fore I should be better pleased, if it was eternally winter. I never speak three sentences to any body. This servant has lived with me five years: he knows the sound of my voice, and that's all: he comes to me every Monday for the expences of the week, which I have reduced to almost an absolute certainty. He gives me every night a list of eatables, out of which I mark what I choose for my dinner. He provides every thing without my troubling myself about the matter. His wife lives here as cook. They have nothing extraordinary to do. I allow them greater wages than common, because of their sitting up at nights. The news-papers are always provided for me, and by that means only I know how the world goes. I go to bed as the morning appears, and rise at night. I read, without concern, the daily accounts of men destroying and ruining one another. I have prudently escaped their designs: and never intend to alter my course of life. It was at first tiresome and disagreeable to me: but I am now familiarized and habituated to it. I take a walk at night in the most unfrequented places, for the sake of exercise; and thus drag on an existence I am weary of."

"You may depend upon it, I shall wait on you at your breakfast time. I am honoured by your confidence, at the same time I shall not prove unworthy of it."

"You may not: and I will so far forget my hatred to mankind, as to unbosom myself to you."

"Tis now past three o'clock: I will be punctual."

I took my leave of him, and calling Frank, who

who never was more rejoiced in his life than to hear my voice, quitted the house.

"Good God, sir," said he, "how had you courage to stay with that man by yourself so long?—I kept myself in readiness, in case you should be in danger, to run to your help."

"There was no fear of danger, Frank.—But how did you fare in the kitchen?"

"Oh, very well, sir. The woman, who was very inquisitive, asked me how we came into the house?—So I told her how we had saved the gentleman.—And so she was very much rejoiced to hear it.—And she, and her husband, and I, all drank together to his health: for they says as how he is a very good master."

"So then I find you were not silent in the kitchen."

"I assure you, sir, I asked no questions."

It is unnecessary to tell you, that I passed the day impatiently. I was very desirous of knowing the cause why a man, who seemed to have been well educated, and had every appearance of a gentleman, should thus seclude himself from the world, and invert the order of nature, by turning night into day.—He did not look to be much above forty—had a noble and commanding mien—had the remains of manly beauty in his face. But he had acquired a pallidity, from his manner of life, that shewed he wanted health; and his eyes had a fierceness and vivacity in them, that seemed, at some times, to border upon frenzy. His dress was mourning, but neat and genteel to perfection. All these circumstances only served to increase my wonder.—

The

The hour came, and I hastened up to his house.—I gained instant admittance. He was just risen. He received me with much politeness, and, I flattered myself, with some marks of regard.

“I am going to my breakfast,” said he, smiling.
“However, you may venture to take a dish of
“coffee with me.”

I consented. Every thing was good and valuable that was served to him. When his breakfast was brought up, the man retired as silently as he entered.

“I recollect,” said he, “that you were a
“little surprized at hearing me, when I came
“home last night, and was asked who was at
“the door, answer Beelzebub.”

“’Tis true: I knew not the cause of it.”

“I will tell you then. Some villains in this
“neighbourhood, as this is a most retired and
“private place, by watching me, found that I
“went out every night, and, in consequence of
“it, laid a scheme to rob the house. The
“vigilance of the servant prevented them:
“and ever since, when I go out, I give him
“a watch-word in writing, which I change
“every night; and he opens the door to
“no one that does not answer, and give that
“word.”

“It is a very necessary precaution.”

He had finished his breakfast by this time.—The things were removed, and we were once more left alone.—He was silent for some time.—I was doubtful what to think.—At last he spoke.

“I HAVE

“ I HAVE been considering, since I made you
“ that rash promise last night, to disclose to you
“ the reasons why I live in this extraordinary
“ manner, whether I should fulfil that promise
“ or not.—But as my word has hitherto been
“ sacred, I will still preserve it so. To gratify
“ your curiosity, I open the source of all my
“ misfortunes. When I think of them, I am
“ almost mad.—Then how shall I relate them?
“ I have, for a long time, endeavoured to hide
“ them under the veil of night, and am now go-
“ ing to expose my miseries to public view.—
“ Learn from me, young gentleman, an useful
“ lesson; and believe, that the philosopher who
“ bade you esteem all mankind as your enemies,
“ was the best friend you ever had.—My name
“ is Smith. I am the younger of two sons of
“ my father. He was a younger brother him-
“ self, and, by the bounty of a near relation, he
“ enjoyed a pretty estate. My brother was his
“ favourite. My mother died in childbed with
“ me; and whether he looked upon me as the
“ cause of his losing a wife that was dear to
“ him, I know not, and from thence sprung his
“ disgust to me. However, his affection for her
“ did not prevent his marrying again. He married a
“ woman much younger than himself, by whom he
“ had one daughter. There was but a very few
“ years difference in our ages; and the affection
“ my sister had for me, recompensed, in some
“ shape, the evils I bore from her mother. She
“ plainly saw that my father did not like me so
“ well as he did my brother, and she accordingly
“ never contradicted him, by endeavouring to re-
“ commend me to his favour. It is needless to
“ tell you how much I suffered for the many
“ years

“ years I was at home. I had but one consolation, and that was, the love my sister had for me, and which was, on my part, reciprocally returned. While we were yet children, her fondness for me was very visible; and as she grew up it increased: neither her mother’s menaces or promises could make her quit me. She was always my friend, and the only one I had in the house, and made me amends for my brother’s brutality towards me, and my father’s want of parental affection. My father knew his estate would of consequence devolve to his eldest son: he intended to make an handsome provision for his daughter by his second wife: he seemed indifferent about me.—However, he sent to his eldest brother, when he chanced to be seized with a fever, and told him how his family was situated.

“ You have the right to present to some good livings.—I will put Jack into the church, if you will do something for him.”

“ My uncle promised faithfully he would. I was sent to the university, and when I had taken my degree, was ordained a deacon. My father lived only to see the ceremony performed; in some few days after he died.—However, he had not totally forgot me: he recommended me still more strongly than ever to my uncle, and left me five hundred pounds in his will. Though my brother possessed more than that yearly, I was thankful for what I received, and lamented my parent’s death with more real sincerity than those who had profited more by him. I intended to wait for my uncle’s fulfilling his promise with patience, and determined to quit the country, that I might

“ escape

“ escape from my brother’s insults, who was then
“ a mere country squire, and equally despised my
“ learning and my poverty. I came up to Lon-
“ don, and served a cure for some time. In the
“ parish where I officiated lived an elderly gen-
“ tlewoman, who had, for her only dependance,
“ a small annuity : she had her niece with her,
“ who had lost both her father and mother, and
“ was intirely supported by her aunt. I had re-
“ marked the beauty, the elegance, the neatness,
“ the modesty of this lovely young creature, as
“ she came to church, and began to feel an af-
“ fection for her. I had not spoken to her ; so
“ could not tell whether she had an understand-
“ ing correspondent to her personal beauty. I
“ contrived, at last, to get myself introduced to
“ her aunt, and from thence I got acquainted
“ with the niece.—In those days, sir, I was not
“ contemptible in my person ; the hand of mis-
“ fortune has altered my features, and time has
“ furrowed my face.—Being a constant visitor at
“ the house of the charming girl, the aunt saw
“ through my visits, perceived my passion for her
“ amiable niece, and did not discourage it. I
“ was upon a very good footing with them
“ both, and was not disagreeable to the object
“ of my wishes, when I received a letter from
“ my dear sister, acquainting me, that the in-
“ cumbent of one of the best livings in my un-
“ cle’s gift was in a bad way ; that he had been
“ given over ; and that if I ever hoped to profit
“ by my uncle’s promise, it was my business to
“ go down as fast as I could, to be on the spot.
“ This letter gave me great pleasure : I never
“ doubted my uncle’s sincerity, nor had any rea-
“ son to doubt it. I then flew to my dear Patty,

“ to

“ to let her know what an agreeable change
 “ would, in all probability, soon happen in my
 “ affairs;—and found her, happily, alone. My
 “ heart throbbed with transport when I beheld
 “ her!—To be blessed at once with an easy inde-
 “ pendence and with her, was all that Providence
 “ could bestow on me: it was all I wanted. I
 “ had nothing more to wish for: that was the
 “ most favourable opportunity that had yet of-
 “ fered of explaining my sentiments to her. I
 “ exulted in the thoughts of raising her little for-
 “ tunes. My offers were not unacceptable: she
 “ smiled a sweet consent to my wishes: we were
 “ both happy. Her aunt came in: she saw a
 “ pleasing confusion in her niece’s countenance,
 “ and wanted to know what was the matter. I
 “ told her; and explaining my situation to her,
 “ informed her of my hopes and well-founded
 “ expectations.

“ I go to-morrow morning,” said I, “ from
 “ London. If this gentleman dies, I have not
 “ the smallest doubt but I shall have his living.
 “ If he does not, I must only wait longer with
 “ patience. In the mean time, I have assured
 “ your amiable niece, that her happiness is so
 “ connected with mine, that I cannot live with-
 “ out her. She is not averse to my suit, if it
 “ meets your approbation. What am I to hope,
 “ madam?”

“ Every thing from your merit, sir,” re-
 “ turned Mrs. Nesbitt. “ But you had better
 “ wait a little, till you see how matters are set-
 “ tled, till you know whether your uncle shall
 “ dispose of this living elsewhere, or no.”

“ That is totally impossible: the whole coun-
 “ try is a witness to his promise, which he made
 “ to his dying brother.”

“ I do

"I do not doubt, sir, but he will fulfil his promise. As you leave town to-morrow, we shall be glad of your company, to spend your evening with us."

"I obeyed, and spent an afternoon of happiness and joy. I departed the next morning, and went to my uncle, and learned, that the incumbent was dead, and my uncle had sold the living. I was struck dumb with vexation and surprize!—Not on my own account did I feel; my darling Patty was uppermost in my imagination, and I represented to myself the uneasiness and mortification she would undergo on the discovery of this disappointment. I despised my worthless uncle too much to upbraid him. Put into the church contrary to my inclinations, I depended upon preferment solely through his means. I went to my sister. The dear girl, still the same fond and affectionate friend she ever was, consoled me, as well as she could, on my loss.

"There were attempts made to purchase it for you by your friends," said she, "but in vain. What can you do?"—

"I knew not. Unaccustomed to keep any thing a secret from her, I related to her my passion for my Patty, and told her the promises I had made her in consequence of my too great reliance on my uncle's word.—She pitied me; and that was all she could do then.

"I will fly this place," said I, "made hateful to me by the perfidy of one relation, and the ill treatment of a brother. I will not remain here, to endure the insults of those who have wronged me."

"You

“ You must stay here,” said she, “ to oblige
“ me. There is a gentleman, who has paid his
“ addresses to me for some time: he is dear to
“ me, and very deservedly so. My mother ap-
“ proves my choice, and I shall marry him
“ within a few days. You must stay here, and
“ perform the ceremony. I shall be happier
“ when my dear brother makes me the wife of
“ him I love.”

“ I consented to stay, upon that account only.
“ The man she was to be married to was far,
“ very far her superior in point of fortune, and
“ rather older than she was; but a man very
“ amiable in his manner, and respectable in his
“ character.

“ I will join you to this gentleman, my dear
“ sister; and it shall be the last clerical duty I
“ will ever perform. I will marry you to him,
“ and the next day throw off my gown.”

“ I did so, and returned to London with all
“ expedition. I went directly to Mrs. Nesbitt's.
“ The eyes of my dear Patty sparkled with joy
“ when she saw me; but that pleasing sensation
“ was abated, when she beheld the marks of sor-
“ row and disappointment in my countenance.
“ To every tender and friendly inquiry concern-
“ ing my health, I made her but one answer,
“ and that was, to tell them the truth of the
“ affair as it had happened. My sighs frequently
“ interrupted my narrative, and the sympathiz-
“ ing tears of the lovely maid accompanied
“ them. Mrs. Nesbitt, who had suffered mis-
“ fortunes, and had learned from custom to bear
“ them, was less affected than either of us,
“ though she partook in our concern.—What
“ were my intentions?—I was resolved to pur-
“ chase

“chase a commission, and leave a country that
“was so disagreeable to me; but could not
“think of parting from all that I held dear to
“me.—Nothing, she said, should divide us.
“The worthy old gentlewoman joined our hands,
“and poured her blessings on us. Our happi-
“ness was complete, and tears of pleasure wash-
“ed away the bitterness of distress.—We entered
“into council.

“Patty,” says Mrs. Nesbitt, “is a good
“girl; that is all. She has no fortune. Yours
“is but small. If you lay it all out upon a com-
“mission, and you should meet with any acci-
“dent, what would become of her? Let us go
“a more prudent way to work. I have a friend
“that has promised to serve me. I cannot tell
“whether he will or not; but I know he is able.
“I will apply to him. If I can procure you a
“pair of colours through his interest, it will save
“your money, and enable you, by the first va-
“cancy, to purchase a lieutenantancy. I will go
“about it to-morrow.”

“She was as good as her word, and, without
“giving me any hopes, I found myself, in a
“week’s time, in possession of an ensign’s com-
“mission. What increased my satisfaction was,
“the regiment was to go abroad, and America
“was the place destined for its station. I had
“but one point more to settle; and that was, to
“unite myself indissolubly to the object of my
“wishes. It was completed; and I was the
“happiest of mankind!—I think of the mo-
“ment with rapture, because I recal to my mind
“the transactions of the blissful scene. I can
“paint to myself the sweet confusion that spread
“over her lovely face, and heightened her
“charms,

“ charms, when she gave her timid, trembling
“ hand to mine !—Oh ! that it had been the last
“ moment of both our lives !—that the lightning
“ of Heaven had burned us together !—or that
“ the yawning earth had afforded us an instant
“ grave in her bowels.”

Here he started from his chair, and, with a look capable of inspiring horror in the boldest man, he traversed the room with precipitate steps. I sat silent and anxious to see him so troubled. He stopped, sighed, resumed his chair, and began again.

“ I will compose myself.—In six weeks after
“ we were married, I was ordered to join my
“ corps. We took an affectionate and mournful
“ leave of the good aunt who had procured us
“ happiness: and we then saw the last of her.—
“ Happy old woman ! that lived not to behold
“ my distresses, but in the peaceful grave, or
“ that seat of rest you merited, now look down
“ with compassion on the frailties of the inhabitants of this world !—Every thing was prepared. We shortly joined the regiment, and an happy and prosperous voyage soon brought us to the immense continent of America. As it was a cheap country, we contrived to live better there upon a small pay, than we could do in England. It would be too tedious, sir, to tell you what happened during my first taking up my residence there: I will mention summarily, that having signalized myself in some engagements which we had with the French and Indians, I was recommended to the purchase of the first vacant lieutenancy, in preference to some senior officers. In the six years of happiness I passed in the bosom of my
“ beloved

“ beloved wife, she gave me two boys, lovely as
“ their mother, but happier than their father,
“ for they both died in their infancy. In that
“ time I got a company. My presumptuous
“ heart now exulted in its security. I had no-
“ thing more to wish for than I possessed. I
“ was beloved by her who was most dear to me,
“ and was independent, secure of fortune and ho-
“ nour. My heart dilated with pride; and as I
“ feared not misfortune from the unguarded quar-
“ ter in which it attacked me, I was the less able
“ to resist or bear its assaults. Six years had
“ fled on downy wings away, when I was or-
“ dered to join the main army. We were
“ to oppose the operations of our ene-
“ mies in that part where the camp was formed.
“ As I had the pleasure of being well respected
“ by the officers of the regiment, and as we had
“ been separated during the winter, they came
“ to visit me on my arrival. Among the rest, a
“ young gentleman, who had lately come into the
“ regiment, was introduced to me. His figure
“ and address struck me: he was handsome, mo-
“ dest, and sensible: he seemed to be a stranger,
“ and that endeared him to me. I felt a great
“ affection for him, from the moment of my
“ seeing him. I had him with me as often as
“ his duty would permit, and, on a more inti-
“ mate acquaintance, I liked him better every
“ day. In order to have more frequent oppor-
“ tunities of doing him service, I got him changed
“ into my company. My regard for him ex-
“ ceeded common friendship: I felt the tender-
“ ness of a father for him. In one of our expe-
“ ditions we were surrounded, on a sudden, by a
“ party of Indians: we made the best defence
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“ we could, and had the good fortune to beat
“ them off, without losing many men. In the
“ beginning of the attack, I saw young Loddon
“ (for that was the young ensign’s name) engage
“ the enemy with a gallantry and bravery that
“ equally pleased and surprized me. His courage
“ had carried him too far: I saw him on the
“ earth. He was yet struggling with an In-
“ dian, who wanted to scalp him. My fusil was
“ charged. I took an instant and a sure aim at
“ his foe, and he covered him, as he fell lifeless
“ on him, with his blood and his brains. I ha-
“ stened to relieve my friend: he was almost ex-
“ hausted with the pain of his wounds, and the
“ loss of blood. I had him carried to my tent,
“ and, under my care, he soon recovered.”

“ It is to you,” said he, “ I am indebted for
“ my life: to your coolness, your intrepidity, and
“ skill, I owe my being. Tell me, tell me, I
“ beseech you, how I shall express my gratitude
“ to you. It may be yet my fate to rescue you
“ from as imminent danger: bring me to the
“ trial, and see if I will flinch from it.”

“ I did every thing I could to compose him,
“ and assure him of my friendship for him. The
“ army separated, and we went into winter quar-
“ ters. The agreeable Loddon added happiness
“ to every society: he was always at our house:
“ he enlivened our parties, and made us pass our
“ time more pleasantly than before. Always
“ welcome wherever he went, his intimacy with
“ us was attributed to the friendship we had for
“ one another.—It was but a small settle-
“ ment where we were stationed, and we were
“ alarmed with the report, that the enemies
“ were coming down upon us.—As we had

“ timely

timely and certain notice of their approach, we knew better how to oppose them. We met them in the morning, and dispersed them, without their doing any mischief: here again, Loddon was wounded; and here again, I was instrumental in saving his life. I was obliged to pursue the fugitives: but my first care was to order Loddon to be carried to my own house, and to have every proper advice and attendance procured for him. In three days I returned home again, and found him better, but very weak. What acknowledgments did he not make me! What professions of gratitude was he always pouring forth! With care and assiduity we got him on his legs again; but he was so feeble, so emaciated, that it was impossible for him to think of joining his corps: he was in a lingering, and, as I thought, a dangerous way. I left him, therefore, to the care of my wife, and I went to the army: I thought her regard for me, induced her to pay that attention to the invalid which helped to re-establish him, as well as her humanity, of which I knew she possessed a large share: I left them, as I foolishly imagined, in grief for my departue. Why did I ever live to return? Why was I not interred in the glorious field, where so many braver and happier men met an eternal rest? The mercy of heaven, which shielded me from the swords of my foes, only reserved me for a more dreadful and disastrous fate. The campaign was over; and I fondly flattered myself, that I was about to return to the embraces of a much-loved wife, and the grateful endearments of an esteemed friend.

"Those reflections shortened the way. I travelled home to them. But."—

As my eyes were fixed on Mr. Smith, as he related this story, I perceived his countenance change suddenly to the most ghastly paleness: his lips lost their colour, and trembled as he spoke: his whole frame was shaken with the most violent agitation. I was alarmed, and would have spoken: he prevented me. "Leave me, Sir," "leave me instantly I conjure you: my griefs are too powerful to admit of comfort; and you would offer it in vain. My miseries are too sacred to be exposed. Leave me then. You have permission to come again." I obeyed without hesitation, and left him to himself.

I had very little inclination to go to see the female merchant; but had more desire to hear the end of Smith's narrative, though I partly guessed at the conclusion of it. This was the second night I had been absent. It was not to be endured. Her letters, of which I received abundance, spoke all the rage, the excess of passion: threats and entreaties alternately dropped from her pen. I was unmoved with both, and determined to find out the cause of Smith's distress, before I saw her. As my night and his morning approached, I prepared to visit him, and gained admittance. The servant let me in without delay. His master had not yet risen. He came down in a short time.

"I have disturbed you, Sir."

"You have not; and I am glad you are come: I will endeavour to finish the recital, of what I can scarcely ever think of without losing my senses. I strive to banish it from my recollection, but in vain. Yet it loses its
"poignancy

poignancy by habit: but I never can tell it; nor have I these seven years ever disclosed it to any body but yourself. You see me now like the sea after a storm: the fury of the tempest is abated, but the waves are not yet allayed. I will finish my account of myself, and give you the satisfaction you require, however painful it may be to myself. I told you how I employed my thoughts on my return home; and every step that brought me nearer to it, added to my fancied happiness. It was evening when I arrived; my heart was ready to bound from my breast, to meet the object of its desires. My accustomed rap at the door, used to bring her to my arms at my return: but I rapped twice, and no answer was made to me. I was alarmed. At last an old servant, that had lived with me for some years, came to the door. I inquired for her mistress with a voice of impatience, and anxiety: she looked at me without speaking a word, and burst into tears. She is dead, she is dead, I exclaimed; let me embrace the remains of her who is so dear to me. I rushed by her, and ran up stairs to the room which had been the happy scene of past pleasures. I expected to have found the mournful appearance of death there: but every thing was void and still, and no answer was made to my exclamation. I stood amazed. I knew not what to do, or where to turn myself. I went down to the servant, who still stood in the place where I had left her. What is the meaning of this appearance of desolation? Where is my wife? Where is Mr. Loddon?

Have you not seen them, Sir?

" I should not ask you about them, if I had."

" They left this house a week ago: they went away together, and said, they intended to go and meet you."

" Then it is too evident: my destruction is sealed; my happiness is for ever undone!"

" I threw myself on the floor in a paroxysm of frenzy and despair: I tore my hair, and beat my breast: I flew to my sword, and had put an end to my existence, if I had not been prevented. I know not how long I remained in this state; but, when my senses were restored, I found myself in bed, with attendants round me: I also found myself weak and ill; but did not at first recollect, what had reduced me to that condition. My reason, at last, returned; and with it my strength increased. I searched the house, and found, that she had taken nothing but her own cloaths with her. I inquired, and traced the road she went; and found out when she and that infamous traitor, Loddon had embarked together for England. What could I say? It would have been exposing my shame and my misfortune, to have told the circumstance as it was. I said, that not finding America to agree with her, Mrs. Smith had my permission to go home, and that I intended soon to follow her. I learned also, that Loddon had, during the summer, been using all his interest to change into another regiment, and that he had succeeded. I had nothing now to do in the world, but pursue the villain who was the author of my ruin and misery, and punish him, in return for the wrongs he had inflicted on me. But what most affect-

ed

“ed me, was, the infidelity of Mrs. Smith.
“She, whom I cherished with the most unabating affection, with the most fervent love; whose face I never suffered *the winds of heaven* to visit too roughly; that she should forsake me, who was once the choice of her heart, who was the husband of her inclination, I could not reconcile to myself. I had never given her any occasion to wish to take an opportunity of revenging herself upon me. How often did I invoke death!—But the cruel tyrant, flies from the wretched who seek him, and is an unwelcome intruder in the palaces of the happy, who shun him. I did not dare lift my hand against my own life. I was miserable; but not wicked enough to commit suicide. “I will seek this perfidious villain, who has robbed me of all that was dear to me, under the mask of friendship and gratitude. I will find him out in whatever part of the world he shall hide himself, and glut my revenge.” I sold every thing I had in America: got leave to sell my commission, and came here in pursuit of them. The winter had delayed me on the continent; and it was some time, after I arrived here, before I could trace them out. Guilt, full of fear and shame, is industrious to conceal itself. She had taken another name; and he, who but just before, had an estate left him by a relation, on condition of changing his name, had sold out of the army; and, by that means also, eluded my inquiries for some time. As her aunt was dead, she had very few or no relations or friends that she was known to; so that she escaped unknown and unnoticed. It was by him only I was enabled to find

“ her out. I wrote to my sister, and acquainted
“ her with my being in England ; but concealed
“ the cause of my journey. I received a most
“ affectionate letter from her, desiring to see me ;
“ and informing me, that the husband was dead ;
“ and had left her all his personal fortune, which
“ was between twenty and thirty thousand
“ pounds : that she begged I would come down,
“ and bring my wife with me, and spend as
“ much time as I thought proper with her. To
“ answer this, I was obliged to let her know the
“ reality of my melancholy situation. This
“ worthy woman offered me every consolation in
“ her power, but it was not adequate to my
“ griefs : neither did time, which in general alle-
“ viates misfortune, or inures us to bear it, as-
“ suage my sorrows, or lighten my woes. By
“ accident I learned, that Loddon was gone to
“ France : and from good authority heard, that
“ he had declared he would take a tour of Eu-
“ rope, and spend three or four years abroad.
“ That was enough for me. My imprudent
“ thirst for vengeance prevented my making the
“ proper inquiries, concerning the place of his re-
“ sidence, from his banker. I hastened away :
“ determined to kill him, or fall myself. It was
“ at Paris I first got an account of him and his
“ companion : they were supposed to be gone to
“ Italy. To Italy I followed them. A year and
“ a half was spent in the pursuit, before I over-
“ took them. I found them at Bologna. I en-
“ tered at night, and in disguise. It was the only
“ pleasurable sensation I had felt for a long time,
“ to think I was so near the man who had done
“ me such an indelible injury.” “ Vengeance
“ hovers over you, wretched man ! the conse-
“ quence

“quence of your guilt. Punishment is at hand,
“Is it not my right to assume it?”—“Prose be-
“fore day. I went to the house where he was
“lodged. I was not known to any of his servants;
“and, had he seen me himself, he could not
“have distinguished me at once, I was so much
“altered from what I had been. I sauntered be-
“fore the door, till I saw him; and, fortunately
“for me, he was alone. My servant, a faithful
“fellow whom I could trust, followed me. I
“bade him take notice of that gentleman; in-
“structed him what to do; and then to go to
“the posthouse where we had put up, and bring
“a carriage to a particular gate which I shewed
“him. He obeyed me: he went to Loddon,
“and told him that an Englishman and a coun-
“tryman, who was in great distress, had heard
“he was in Bologna, and had applied to him to
“let him know it; and that he begged to see
“him, as he was a man of honour, that he
“might tell him a secret that he wanted to re-
“veal. Loddon believed, and followed him to
“the spot I was standing in; which was a lane
“that led to some fields. When he came up to
“me, he asked me how he could serve me. I
“beckoned to him to follow me: he did not
“know me. I trembled with rage as I went on,
“and I wonder my agitations did not discover
“me. He suspected nothing, and followed me.
“It was not only want of suspicion, it was an
“irresistible impulse that hurried him to his de-
“struction. I was leading him to a more retired
“corner of the field, when he stopped.”
“I will follow you no further. If you have
“any thing to say to me, this place is private
“enough.”

“ No place is private enough to divulge the
“ wrongs of an injured husband,” said I, throw-
ing off my disguise; “ and no place is public
“ enough to punish the author of them. There
“ is a long account between us: it is now time
“ it should be settled.—Draw.” He stood
“ amazed.

“ This is rather taking me unprepared.”

“ A man, who can be guilty of committing
“ a crime, should always be prepared to answer
“ for it.”

“ I do not wish to add the depriving you of
“ life, to my other crimes.”

“ You do not wish, then, to add murder to
“ adultery: but I call upon you now to give me
“ that satisfaction, which an injured man has a
“ right to demand. It was the desire of my
“ heart to meet you face to face, to tell you,
“ that you are a most ungrateful villain, a most
“ abandoned coward. If the mere desire of re-
“ venge had infligated me, I might have been
“ able, for a little money, to have procured a
“ couple of those pernicious ruffians who infest
“ this country, to have stabbed thee in the dark,
“ and behind thy back, as thou didst me: but
“ now we are on an equal footing; except that
“ I am armed with injuries and wrongs, which
“ must have satisfaction.”

“ I will bear this: I will even do more: I
“ will make you every reparation in my power.”

“ There is none that the wounded honour of
“ an husband can accept of. Your being alive
“ is a reproach to me: and your blood alone can
“ restore me to my honour. Draw, and defend
“ yourself. My patience is almost exhausted;
“ and I should be sorry that my rage tempted me

“ to

"to commit an action, I should lament all the rest of my life."

"He drew: we engaged. In the beginning, I received a slight wound in my shoulder. I wounded him in return twice, before I had an opportunity of making the fatal lunge which brought him to the earth."

"Your vengeance is complete," said he, as I drew my reeking sword from his breast. "You have been wronged; and you have punished me:—But the temptation was too strong for me to bear; and my struggles were great, before I yielded to seduction. I forgive you, Smith: you have done as you ought to do. Take care of your own safety."

"Wretched young man," said I. "My servant appeared, and I had not time to say any more."

"I very luckily met assistance when I got to the road; and a surgeon, who happened to be passing, and understood French, was sent to his relief: I suppose he died soon after. I hastened, with all the expedition possible, out of the ecclesiastical territories. My heart was eased of one part of its load: and I was determined to stay abroad for some time. I remained at Florence for three months, and thence went to Paris. I staid from England, till I had nearly exhausted all my money, and knew not where to return for more. What was I to do?—By this time, the delirium, that my sorrows had thrown me into, began to subside; my reason and reflection returned, and shewed me objects in their just lights, unclouded by prejudice, and undisguised by passion."

"I lamented,

“ I lamented, very sincerely, my having im-
“ brued my hands in the blood of that young
“ man; and assumed that right to punish, which
“ did not belong to me. My hours were as
“ much, if not more, embittered, than before;
“ and I found my senses at some times disordered.
“ My sister, when I came to England, pressed
“ me to go down to the country to her; but not
“ being perfectly right in my head, and knowing
“ my own infirmity at some intervals, I refused
“ to go, lest I should distress her too much. I
“ mingled with the world, as I grew better; and
“ made fresh connections and friendships: but
“ one friend robbed me, another cheated, ano-
“ ther vilified me in my absence, and, in short,
“ no sincerity was to be found in any of them.
“ My want of money began to make me very
“ necessitous. I had hurt my constitution, by
“ applying too freely to the bottle, to drown my
“ reflections. When in necessity, my pretended
“ friends refused to relieve me. I was on the
“ brink of eternity, when a letter informed me,
“ that my ever-dear and affectionate sister had
“ breathed her last; and left me every thing she
“ was possessed of, as she had no children. It
“ was then I took up this resolution of detaching
“ myself from mankind, whom I detest and des-
“ pise. It was with some difficulty I got servants,
“ who would comply with my humour. At
“ length this man and his wife offered them-
“ selves, and I begin to be used to this nocturnal
“ life. My money is in the funds; and I receive
“ the interest every half-year, without any trou-
“ ble to myself, or having connection with any
“ body. I have made my will, and left my for-
“ tune to my sister’s husband’s right heir, whose
“ it

" it should have been. I wear continual mourn-
" ing, as well for the sister whom I so truly loved,
" as the man who fell by this unfortunate hand.
" If you had been necessitous and distressed, I
" should have given you a pecuniary reward for
" the service you rendered me: as you are not,
" I have conferred a higher favour on you. I
" shall walk in those places for the future where
" I may be indebted for my safety to the vigilance
" of the public guardians of the night.—You
" can now know no more about me. I shall
" never form a connection, or institute even an
" acquaintance, again with any man. Your
" curiosity is gratified. You know my resolution.
" Your servant."

He did not wait for a reply. He took a candle, and went up stairs; and as I left the house, could not help muttering to myself, "What a deal of misery and misfortune has one vile woman occasioned!"

I went from him to see my mistress.—Tears and reproaches were the first course of my entertainment. With small difficulty I dried up the first, and silenced the last. We soon were reconciled: I was obliged to patch up a story as an excuse for my absence: for, had I told her any part of the truth, her curiosity would not have suffered me to rest, till I had repeated all Smith's adventures to her: a trouble I did not choose to take; and a confidence I did not intend to repose in her. You may suppose that my good opinion of the virtues of her sex, was not increased, by the history I had lately heard related. My good lady took the best method she could to shew me, that I was not wrong in my conjectures of them.

In

In one of those wanton fits of love, painting her present happiness with your humble, and comparing her situation with her husband and with me; "Lord," says she, "I have heard from the fool. My dear Charles, read his letter: for pity's sake, did you ever know a man make himself so ridiculous?" I thought it might be so, and perhaps might have found an excuse for her conduct in it: so took the letter, and read it. But how much was I surprised, to find the most tender and endearing expressions of fondness and affection couched in good language, and in happy terms! An eager solicitude to return; a desire to be with her above any thing else in the world; an unlimited confidence of his affairs, and a noble and manly train of sentiments, appeared throughout this letter. It struck me, and very forcibly. "What a sad rascal am I," said I to myself, "to invade the bed, and destroy the happiness of a man, who I have great reason to believe is much worthier than myself!—Yet it is not so much my fault. His wife has invited me. But am not I a rogue, to be tempted to commit such wrong, and do such injustice? Should I like it myself?" The answers were obvious: they were self-evident: they were convincing. I returned the letter, and viewed her with hatred and disgust. From that moment, her ingratitude and perfidy shocked me. I grew thoughtful, and dull. She endeavoured to rouse me: but all her attempts were vain. I pretended illness; and, by that means, got away: determined, when I left her, never to see her again.

How

How I got rid of my lady, you shall be informed in my next—which you shall have soon.—In the interim believe me truly

Yours,

CHARLES HORTON.



LETTER XVII.

To the SAME, in Continuation.

MY thoughts were sufficiently occupied in my way home. “Wretched,” said I, “is the condition of men, who are forced to repose their honour upon the faith of such women; yet the custom of this country is such, that the transgression of the wife stigmatizes the husband! Barbarous custom! Ill placed censure! I am a witness that the fondness, the affection, the truth of the husband, cannot ensure the fidelity of his wife. What is to be done? to what cause is this depravity to be attributed?” I could not tell: and I believe it would puzzle all the divines and philosophers since the creation of Eve, to give a reason for it.

I learned, when I arrived at home, that my father intended going to the country the next day; and that he proposed my leaving London either that day or the next. I agreed to the proposal

posaf with much pleasure; and, in a short note to the lady, acquainted her, that as I was going abroad, I should not have the pleasure of seeing her again: that I was her slave. It was cool and courtly, as Sir Wifful Witwou'd says. It drew an answer full of bitterness on me. But as soon as I read the address at the top. — “Dear perfidious Horton” — threw the epistle into the fire. I did not like the woman well enough to read her letters. Every thing was prepared for my departure: but instead of going to Dover by land, I took my baggage on board one of the packets in the river that was going to France. When we got into the Downs, the wind became contrary, and it blew very hard. I repented my having trusted myself to the seas. We found the storm increase: and the master of the vessel thought it more prudent to make to some harbour, than keep the sea any longer. We came to an anchor on the coast of Sussex. I went ashore along with the gentleman who was to accompany me in my tour. Some few straggling houses were scattered at a distance from each other: We made up to the first cottage we saw. We could receive no entertainment there; but were told, if we went to the parson's, he would give us any thing he had: and it was the only house in that part of the world where gentlefolks could be served. We went there, according to the peasant's direction. A small neat house, surrounded with white paling, pointed out to us the asylum we sought. He came to the door on our approach. A man about forty; with a dignity and simplicity in his manner that awed, at the same time it pleased you. We told him our situation: that we were informed of his hospitality,

lity, and hoped, from the circumstances that that brought us there, he would think us entitled to share it. He invited us to come in with the greatest cordiality and good nature.—“ You are now, gentlemen, in the wildest spot of Suffex : there can be no refreshments procured for you, in this part of the world, befitting you. If you will partake of my humble fare, you shall have it, with that welcome, which will shew you, that I esteem your calling here as an obligation conferred on me.” His wife, soon after, entered the room. She was younger than him, and was a fine woman. Her dress was neatness itself. She received us with a politeness and attention, which is more particularly the province of the women. When she went out to attend her family affairs, which might have been put in some confusion by our unexpected visit, though we saw none of it, the good man took an opportunity of shewing us his garden, which, he said, he attended himself principally, as well for the sake of exercise, as from choice.—In our walk, he gave us to understand, that he was but curate of that place.

“ The living,” said he, “ is worth three hundred and fifty pounds a year ; and I have forty pounds for doing the duty of it. I have been here now near ten years : and, thanks to God, I make things answer very well. The rector lets me live in his house, because I keep it in repair, and have a spare bed for him when he chooses to come into the country. I have made myself agreeable to the greater part of my parishioners ; and they frequently send me little presents, which help me in supporting my family. In return, I have the

“ plea-

pleasure of doing them service. I have a little
knowledge of physic, and am physician to the
greater part of the parish. I keep them from
quarrelling with one another: and we are, in
general, a family of harmony. The people
see, that I study to promote their real good;
and they are attentive to me. By this means,
I have acquired an authority among them,
that is not easily attained. In my private life
I am as happy as any man can be: and my
prayer to the giver of all good things, is, that
he may, if it be his blessed will, continue it to
me. I am the son of a clergyman, who had
but little more than his living to support him:
he determined to bring me up to the church.
My brother went to sea, where he still remains,
and is a lieutenant of a man of war. My
father's patron had promised me his living
when it fell. I was in orders before my father's
death, and served the cure. He had saved
near a thousand pounds. This he divided
equally between four of us: two boys and two
girls. I refused to take my share; and per-
suaded my brother to give our respective moi-
ties up to my sisters, who wanted it more than
we did. We had the pleasure, in consequence
of it, to see the poor girls happily married.
We were to shift for ourselves. The living
my father had, was given to some friend's
friend that voted, at an election, in favour of
the gentleman who had the right of presenta-
tion. I went to serve as a curate with a neigh-
bouring clergyman. My wife was his daugh-
ter. We liked one another, and were married.
The father, who was a very avaricious man,
was so much offended, he would never see us
again;

“ again ; and when he died, he left every thing
“ away from us. I soon after got this cure. I
“ have five children, whom you shall see pre-
“ sently ; three boys and two girls. We have
“ had more, but it has pleased God to take them
“ to himself. I am as happy and contented as if
“ I was possessed of a thousand pounds. My
“ trust is, that he who feeds the ravens, and
“ provides for the beasts of the field, will also take
“ care of me. I am thankful for what I have,
“ and endeavour to deserve the blessings that are
“ showered down upon me.”

He was interrupted by a boy about seven years old, blooming as a cherub, running up to him, and telling him, that his mamma sent him to let him and the gentleman know that dinner was ready.

“ You will have plain but wholesome food,
“ gentlemen. This is my second boy. I amuse
“ myself in taking care of the education of my
“ children. If I have nothing else, I will leave
“ them a good education, and endeavour to make
“ them good Christians and good citizens of the
“ world.”

A repast, remarkable for its goodness and cleanliness, added to our appetites. Round the table sat five sweet children. Never did I think matrimony respectable before. The wishes of the husband, reflected in the eyes of his wife, were communicated to the whole family ;—like a watch, where many wheels are put in motion by the action of one spring.—I partook of the happiness that I saw the worthy couple enjoy in the contemplation of their young ones.—Far from grandeur, from wealth and ostentation, true pleasure dwells. The wife knew not temptation, and
the

she was the joy of her husband: she was the chaste, the virtuous partner of an honest man's bosom.—When the things were removed, there were punch and wine placed before us.

“This liquor,” adds the worthy divine, “I have either sent me as a present by a neighbour, or I purchase a little, to oblige a friend when he comes to see me, at an easy rate, from the people who practise a contraband trade upon the coast. I would willingly render unto Cæsar those things that are Cæsar's; but my necessities will not permit me. Thus we live as you see, sir. We have plenty, without profusion; and that is all we want.”

I admired the regularity of his conduct in the care of his family, which is too minute to relate to you now; but it bespoke throughout the honest man, the tender father, and the diligent minister of religion. The wind still continued contrary; and he pressed us, with great earnestness, to take the spare bed which the rector reserved for himself. We consented, as we found it impossible to pursue our voyage. The time passed away very agreeably: the unaffected harmony and concord that reigned between him and his wife, afforded me a most sensible pleasure. At eight the children came into the room where we were sitting. The maid servant (for they had only one) accompanied them.

“’Tis well,” said he, rising up. Then turning to us, “It is our custom,” added he, “before we go to rest, to return our thanks to the beneficent Being who has protected us through the day. It is a duty incumbent on us, and, to every grateful heart, it should be the most pleasing.”

I told

I told him, I should be glad to have an opportunity of joining in prayer with him: that I had lately escaped from dangers, and thought I ought to return my thanks to the Being that preserved me. The manner in which he read a few short, but select prayers, affected me much. He made me feel what I was about, by the fervency of his devotion, and the attention he paid to it himself. The behaviour of the children added to my surprize. Their deportment seemed rather to proceed from their inclination, and a sense of their duty, than from the force of habit, or a constrained obedience to the commands of a parent.

When they had taken their leave, and were retired to bed, “ You may think it odd,” said he, “ that I introduced my servant into the room. “ I consider all mankind as the children of one “ parent, who has allotted to them different duties to perform, and different pursuits to follow. Those in the more elevated stations of “ life have more to be accountable for than those “ in humbler spheres; yet because that poor “ servant is restricted to a narrow circle, and “ confined, both as to her understanding and employments, to a small compass, she is not to “ be neglected and despised. We are all equally “ worthy, as we comparatively do our duty; “ and the poor ploughman, that does his duty to “ the extent of his knowledge, is a more respectable character than the first peer in the “ land, who does not. It is a lesson of humility to my children, and should be so to every “ body else, to shew them, that the supplications “ of the meanest and lowest of mankind are free “ of access to the throne of the supreme Author “ of

“ of the universe : when we address him, we
“ should be all on a level.”

The next day was Sunday. We all went to church. The respect the greater part of his parishioners paid him, plainly shewed how much they esteemed him. I never remember to have been so well pleased, or put so much in mind of my duty as I was by his reading the liturgy. His sermon suited his congregation, and was of a piece with his manners: plain, simple and easily understood. He did not waste his time in explaining abstruse points to those, to whom it was very immaterial whether they were explained or not. He overset no controverted doctrines, and established no favourite hypotheses of his own: he taught them in the plainest language their moral duties, founded on the basis of the purest religion. His audience listened to him with attention, because his discourse was suited to their capacities. They understood every sentence of it, and conviction followed his words. I was much delighted with him: and expressed my satisfaction on our return home. We dined with him again: and, in the evening, the wind proving fair, we were called upon to go aboard. He accompanied us down to the water-side; and there, after thanking him for his civility to us, we pursued our voyage. The life this gentleman led, was a matter of wonder and envy to me. I was sure, by being educated at a college, he must have had a notion of more elevated life: how could he be content? I could not conceive it: and envied his happiness, who could be confined in so small bounds, without a wish to extend them. I believed better of his wife than ever I had done of any other woman: and thought, were I married

to

to such a one, of whom I could not possibly have any suspicion, that I should be as happy as he was. I determined to look out for such a wife: but it has not been my fate to meet her yet. All the prudent resolutions I had made, vanished when I landed in France. Variety and novelty washed those impressions, too slightly stamped to be lasting, quite away. I am determined to confess my faults and foibles. Paris, the metropolis of pleasure, had many charms for me. I plunged into the midst of the fashionable dissipation that reigns there. Many intrigues I entered into; but none remarkable enough to relate to you, till one night being at the opera, and very hot, I left the house and went into the *Thuilleries*, in order to walk about, and cool myself.

I had not been there long, when I heard an hasty step behind me. I turned to see who it was; and perceived a lady, elegantly dressed, walking towards me very smartly.—As she was near me when I turned about, and she saw me looking at her, she stumbled; and gave me an opportunity of saving her from falling, and entering into a conversation with her. That was soon done. I complained it was very hot.

“You found it disagreeable,” said she. “I perceived it, and followed you out.”

“You did me the honour to take notice of me, then.”

“I have done so before, and wanted to have an opportunity of speaking to you: Are you engaged at supper?”

“I am.”

“Where?”

“At home.”

“With whom?”

“Some”

"Some friends and countrymen."

"Are there to be any women?"

"No."

"Then you must not go to them: you shall sup with me."

"They are now at my house waiting for me."

"Well; allow it; send an excuse to them:

"tell them you are going to sup with a lady.

"Shameful! to refuse my invitation, and go

"home to sup with a parcel of men, whom you

"may see every night, Is your carriage here?"

"It is."

"Well, then, send your servants home: let them

"tell your friends you are engaged. Keep your

"carriage, and I will direct your coachman where

"to drive us. My carriage shall also be sent

"home."

She accordingly dismissed her servants, and came to me again.

"Let us go," said she, "are you ready? You are an Englishman, and are not afraid to venture along with me."

I assured her I was not, and handed her into the coach. She gave directions to the coachman, and away we went. The conversation was kept up in our journey with much sprightliness on her part. This had the air of an uncommon adventure, and I was beating my brains to think where it would terminate: however, I did not care how or where. A woman was with me, and pleasure was my guide. We stopped in a narrow lane, where we got out. The coach was desired to wait. She took me by the hand, and led me through some intricate turnings for a little way: she stopped at the door of a small house, which opened when she knocked: I was shewn into an elegant little parlour:

parlour: it was an apartment in the temple of pleasure. Every part of the furniture displayed a magnificence and grandeur that surprized, and a taste that charmed me. When the first emotions of my astonishment were over, she came to me.

“How do you like this place, Sir?”

“It is a temple of Venus, but it is unworthy the goddess that is worshipped in it.”

She threw herself on one of the sofas that decorated the room: it only wanted her presence to compleat that air of voluptuousness that it was designed to inspire. The mistress of this *pavilion* was about twenty-eight: her skin was whiter than most Frenchwomen I had seen: she was exquisitely shaped; and had a good humour and pleasantry in her face, that incited the most sprightly ideas. Her eyes, black as jet, sparkled with a most animating lustre, as they turned their bewitching beams on me. In raptures I threw myself at her feet.

“I am enchanted,” said I. “Tell me under what name, or in what manner, you choose to be adored. I cannot conceive that you are mortal: but I cannot help saying I wish you to be so.”

“Perhaps you will find me so,” said she, “and it is very likely that I shall also discover you to be one, and, what I am most afraid of, a frail, fickle, and inconstant one.”

“You have the best security in the world against that in your own hands.”

“I do not know,” said she, “as to that; but you Englishmen boast of favours in such a manner, that one should be cautious how one trusts you. I have seen you several times: I like you:

"my bringing you here is a proof of it. How
 "shall I assure myself I shall not be betrayed."

I began to vow an eternal fidelity to her; and
 would have sworn to set fire to the Bastile at that
 moment, if she had required it.

"I do not want you," says she, "to promise
 "what you cannot perform: but you are a man
 "of honour, and, as I am informed, of family.
 "Here," says she, drawing my sword, and put-
 "ting it into my hands, "kiss this, and promise and
 "swear by it, and your honour, never to reveal,
 "while you are in Paris, any thing that may pass
 "between us here, nor to take the least notice
 "of me when you see me in any public place,
 "nor to make any inquiries after me till I can
 "give you permission. When I desire to see
 "you, you shall always receive a billet from me,
 "appointing you a time and place; and you may
 "depend upon it I will never deceive or disap-
 "point you."

I went through the ceremonies she prescribed.

"Are you satisfied now, madam?"

"I am partly," says she; "but I am sure
 "you will gratify a woman's fancy, who only
 "wants to secure her own reputation."

"There is nothing I will not do to satisfy you,
 "madam; to convince you of my sincerity, and
 "my love."

"Well then," said she, with a solemnity of
 voice and countenance, and pulling out a small
 golden crucifix that hung on her panting bosom,
 "we are both Christians, both of the same faith,
 "though we are not of the same manner of
 "thinking: kiss this, and swear by it in the same
 "manner you did by the sword. Repeat that
 "oath."

Her

Her address startled me: but as it was no difficult thing for me to keep the secret, or rather as I had no intention to break it, I readily made the promise.

"I am satisfied," said she: and opening a door, led me into a chamber that appertained to the inner apartment, and seemed, if possible, more calculated to inspire tender desire, than the other. We spent some time there. On our return to the parlour, a table was spread: a delicious and luxurious repast was prepared. We supped. The richest wines were at hand: but no attendant appeared. We staid together till the hour warned us to think of separating: and parted, but with repeated promises of meeting soon again. She conducted me to my coach, and I left her. I think I had better conclude my adventure with her at once, than suffer it to break in upon the other part of my story. In three days I saw her again: we frequently met in public, and passed each other with the most perfect indifference, while our private interviews still continued. This went on for near a month, when I was taken violently ill: a cold and fever seized me. Informed by the servant that brought her letters to me that I was ill, she threw aside her discretion, and came to me. You may judge that I was much surprized.

"For heaven's sake, madam, what has brought you here?"

"My love for you. Do you think I could hear of your being ill, and not see you? You are not properly attended: I will send my own physician to you."

She did so: and twice or three times a day she visited me: the doctor was a man of skill and

learning, and soon set me on my legs again. When I was recovered, she thus addressed me one day.

“ I have tried you, and find you worthy of my esteem and regard: I will now give you the greatest mark of it in my power. You are engaged to dine to-morrow with my husband.”

“ Your husband, madam !”

“ Yes, my dear friend, with my husband. He is a man who you will find worthy of your acquaintance, and I will introduce you to him.”

I was astonished; and would, at first, have avoided seeing him; but she insisted upon it, and I was obliged to go. He received me with a great deal of true politeness; was a man of character and fashion; and, to me, appeared very amiable and deserving to be loved. I dined often at his house; and, till I quitted Paris, always found a reception at the little pavilion. This engagement entertained me in the main very agreeably: it gave me pain only when I was obliged to see the husband; and, for that reason, I did not visit him half so often as I would have wished to have done.

In the public places, one meets with numbers of one's countrymen, who are not always to be avoided. Though I did not travel to converse with Englishmen, yet I was obliged to be in their company very often. Among them was a gentleman, whose manner and behaviour attracted my esteem and attention. He had the remains of a very handsome face: but he had the countenance of sickness. He was tall, and genteel; though he was extremely emaciated, in consequence of
some

some fatal disorder, as I apprehended: he had been abroad for many years; and shewed me several little civilities in instructing me in the customs of the place I was in, and those which I was to go through. He sought, and obtained, a particular place in my friendship. He was a very sensible and intelligent man; and had enriched his natural fund of good sense, with many just observations, drawn from his experience in the different parts of the world he had been in. We were chatting together one evening very seriously; and, in the course of conversation, he happened to mention, that he had been in the English service in the American war. I asked him what part of the continent he had been in. He mentioned the place. I asked him if he knew Captain Smith. At hearing his name, he looked as if he had been shot. He immediately demanded, what I meant by that question? I told him; nothing more than to know if he had been acquainted with him, as I had heard the captain say, that he had resided in that part of the world.

"No man," answered Mowbray, for that was his name, "was more intimate with him than I was."

"He was wronged by an unhappy man, who has long since expiated his crime: Did you know him too, Sir?"

"I knew him well, Sir: but he is not dead."

"The more is the pity: the earth has one more villain upon it than it ought to have."

"The unfortunate Loddon deserves in part that appellation; but he has much to say in his justification: if you heard him, Sir, you

“ would allow him faulty, but not entirely to
“ blame: he lives, and lives to repent his
“ crimes.”

“ I am glad to hear it. May the ear of mercy
“ be open to his supplications; and may he be
“ forgiven the misfortunes he has brought upon a
“ worthy and respectable man: may his perfidy
“ and ingratitude be no more remembered!”

“ You now speak and wish like a man: may
“ your prayer have its effect! Be not surprised,
“ Sir, when I tell you, that I am that unhappy
“ man.”

“ I was petrified.”

“ You! you, Sir! you Mr. Loddon! I
“ thought you were killed at Bologna.”

“ I very narrowly escaped with life, indeed:
“ and this bad state of health I am in, is entirely
“ owing to the wound I received there: but you
“ seem acquainted with Captain Smith, Sir.
“ Will you permit me to ask some questions
“ concerning him?”

“ By all means: and I will answer such as I
“ can.”

He found, in the course of his inquiries, that I was very well acquainted with every part of his transactions with the Captain, that could possibly come to my knowledge through his means.

He then told me, that it was morally impossible I should know more than one part of the story. “ I will therefore tell you,” added he, “ the proceedings of that unhappy woman with regard to me. It is with shame that I am going to confess my guilt: but as it will serve to wipe a greater stain of infamy away, I ought to do it for my own sake. When I say, that I owe more to the kindness of Captain
“ Smith,

“ Smith, than any other person in the world, I
“ scarcely do him justice. By acknowledging
“ my obligations to him, I only aggravate my
“ own crime. He saved my life twice. He has
“ been a father to me. When I first became
“ acquainted with him at the camp, a mutual
“ liking soon created an intimacy. We were
“ always together. When we returned to win-
“ ter quarters, his house was mine: the most
“ perfect amity subsisted between us. His wife
“ was truly amiable: she was of a disposition the
“ most tender and compassionate, and had a
“ softness in her manner and voice, that was be-
“ witching. I found my sprightliness and levity,
“ as I was then a very young man, rendered me
“ agreeable to the whole family: and to nobody
“ more, than to her. I wished to please: it was
“ all the return I could make for the favours
“ that were conferred upon me. I unfortunately
“ succeeded too well. The friend of Captain
“ Smith, was unhappily the favourite of his wife.
“ I wish you to believe me sincere, when I
“ assure you, that, of all other women in the
“ world, the wife of the man to whom I was so
“ much indebted, and the wife of whom he was
“ so remarkably fond, that he seemed to build
“ all his happiness upon her, was the last woman
“ whom I would attempt to seduce. Yet my
“ partiality for my friend, could not prevent my
“ seeing his wife’s guilty attachment to me. A
“ thousand little circumstances told me a secret,
“ that I wish had never been revealed. I absent-
“ ed myself from the house: it created jealousy
“ and uneasiness, and I was obliged to continue
“ my visits as usual. I observed an accusation in
“ her eyes, and avoided looking at them. I was

“ in a disagreeable state of dreadful anxiety,
“ when an account was received, that the Indians
“ intended paying us a visit. I was not displeas-
“ ed at the news. We met our enemies by sur-
“ prize. In the engagement, my desire of sig-
“ nalizing myself carried me rather too far;
“ and I fell, oppressed by wounds: the Captain
“ here again saved me from destruction. With
“ a tenderness, truly parental, he ordered me to
“ be carried to his own house, as he supposed I
“ should not have proper attendance elsewhere.
“ Little did he know then, that he was harbour-
“ ing a snake in his bosom, that would sting him
“ to death. I was senseless when I was brought
“ in, and how long I continued so, I know not:
“ but the first object I beheld was Mrs. Smith,
“ sitting on my bedside, weeping, in all the agony
“ of affliction.”

“ Oh heaven! Mrs. Smith, where am I? or
“ why do you cry?”

“ These were my first accents.”

“ How can I avoid weeping,” cried she, to
“ see you reduced to this deplorable and dangerous
“ situation? You are with me, in my house,
“ where the best care shall be taken of you.
“ You shall be treated in the tenderest manner.
“ Oh, Loddon, it breaks my heart to see you
“ thus!”

“ I took her hand and pressed it to my lips.”

“ You are all goodness, madam!”

“ Do not disturb yourself: the surgeon order-
“ ed you should be kept quiet: I only watched
“ your opening your eyes, to see you restored to
“ life again: make yourself easy, and keep your-
“ self composed.”

“ She

“ She left me, and I foresaw the consequences
“ of this fatal affair. I could not avoid her now,
“ as I had heretofore done. I was confined to
“ a bed of sickness; and, by that means, was
“ only put into a situation that helped to ruin
“ me. In me, honour, gratitude, and friend-
“ ship, were to be extinguished; and misery and
“ destruction awaited my benefactor. I formed
“ the most prudent resolutions, which I intend-
“ ed and promised to adhere to most inviolably.
“ In a short time after, the Captain returned. I
“ was better: but still very weak. The ten-
“ derness that he expressed, the care he took to
“ amuse and restore me to my health, only shew-
“ ed the foulness of my crime, should I be weak
“ enough to yield to temptation. But I could
“ not reveal my situation to him, and had not
“ power to fly from it. While I was confined
“ to my bed, in her husband’s absence, Mrs.
“ Smith was always with me: her tenderness,
“ her concern, and the anxiety she expressed,
“ fully evinced the cause. I too plainly perceiv-
“ ed what she intended. Too feeble to accom-
“ pany the men to the camp, I was therefore
“ left behind in Mrs. Smith’s care: it is in vain
“ to tell you step by step the progress of my
“ guilt; and the methods she took to make
“ me forget every thing that ought to be re-
“ spectable and honourable. Let it suffice to say,
“ that we indulged ourselves in infamy; and, in
“ the Lethean cup of criminal pleasure, we
“ drowned reflection for some time: it could not
“ last long. I wrote over to England, and had
“ leave to change into another regiment; and,
“ in the absence of my friend, I robbed him of
“ his wife. You seem to be acquainted with
“ every

“ every thing that happened afterwards, to the
“ duel at Bologna. He drew me, it is true, to
“ the field where we fought, without my even
“ suspecting his design, or knowing the person
“ whom I followed. I would have avoided
“ fighting him, if I could. Conscious that I
“ had injured him too much to be ever forgiven,
“ I could not think of arming myself against his
“ life. I bore much reproach from him, before
“ I even thought of standing in my own defence.
“ His was the fortune of the day : nor do I con-
“ demn him, although I know he is the occasion
“ of my dragging about this wretched existence.
“ He was right in what he did ; and only aven-
“ ged himself on the person who had wronged
“ him. It is what I would have done myself :
“ but he knows not what temptations I with-
“ stood, what a combat I had with myself, ere I
“ failed in my duty as a friend, or forgot my
“ gratitude to him. He left me on the field ;
“ but meeting assistance very luckily, he sent a
“ surgeon to me. He was a man of skill ; and
“ had I not fallen into the hands of such a person,
“ I should have died. My conflict with death
“ was a very long one. At length, heaven spar-
“ ed my life, and gave me an opportunity to see
“ and repent of my follies. Mrs Smith, who
“ attended me with great care and tenderness
“ during my cure, I determined to provide for.
“ She was excessively enraged against her hus-
“ band, when she came to learn, that it was from
“ his arm I had received my hurt. She re-
“ proached, and imprecated the vengeance of
“ heaven on him. I was in a very fair way of
“ recovery, before ever I informed her how I
“ came in that condition.”

When

When I had listened to her transports of rage, I told her very coolly, “ that I considered Mr. Smith as a man of spirit, and that he had acted as he ought. That I had wronged and injured him, and deserved the treatment I had met with. That he had used me with more honesty and generosity than I had shewn to him. If he had served me as I merited,” continued I, “ he would have come behind me, and stabbed me. I should have experienced the same treachery from him that I exercised towards him. I have done him foul injustice : and every hour we live together, I add to it. Heaven, in the hours of pain and torment, the punishment of my crimes, inspired me with a proper abhorrence of myself. I have ruined and undone that worthy man’s peace for ever : and will now endeavour to make some atonement for it. Your return to England will be attended with very mortifying circumstances to you : I would therefore advise you to remain where you are.—After this hour, we never cohabit together again. I would therefore recommend it to you to choose some convent here, that you may retire from the world, and lament, as well the crimes you have committed yourself, as those you have made me commit. If you do so, care shall be taken to settle a proper pension on you : if not, you must abide the consequences.”

“ Her prayers, entreaties, and supplications, had no effect on me. I was resolute ; and she saw me preparing to leave Bologna, before she came to any determination. At last, she thought better to embrace the proposal I made her ; and, before I left Italy, saw her fixed, I
“ suppose,

“suppose, for life. I went to Spa, and Aix la
“Chapelle. I have been at Montpellier and
“Nice; and have tried every place that is re-
“ported salutary, or famous for the purity of the
“air, without finding much relief. I am now
“advised to try my native climate, and shall
“soon go to England. I am glad to hear Mr.
“Smith still lives; and have no doubt, but he
“will be pleased to know that he has not my
“death to answer for, and that his wife has re-
“tired from the world.”

“I believe he would,” said I; “and shall
“make it my business to acquaint him of it:
“convinced that I shall lighten the load that is on
“his mind concerning you.”

I took the occasion of beginning a correspon-
dence with Mr. Smith; and thought that a dis-
covery of this nature might induce him to write
to me; and, by that means, that I should draw
him from his unnatural solitude. He did return
me an answer, in which he acknowledged him-
self much obliged to me for the trouble that I had
taken; that it had given him great relief: but
did not say, whether he intended to change his
manner of living, or not.

It will be impossible for me, dear Simpson, to
give the particulars of my tour through France
and Italy.—I led a life of gallantry; and had
always sufficient encouragement from the women,
to make me pass my time very agreeably. But
do not imagine that it was amongst those who are
so easily come at, that I spent my softer hours.
Abroad and at home, 'tis all the same. Nature
is uniform; and her productions are alike. There
is a love of pleasure grafted in every woman's
heart: as it is a luxuriant soil, it spreads its
branches

branches apace, and gets possession of the whole body at last. Nature is my peculiar study: and women are my favourite books. Perhaps you will tell me, that I have thrown away my time. I do not think so: for I have acquired a knowledge of the sex, that must be the source of my future happiness or misery. I observe, that, let the conduct of the husband be what it may, the behaviour of the wife is always the same. In France, when women are married, they immediately entertain a long *suite* of gallants: the husband sees and knows what is going forward: he cannot help himself: and all he has to do is, to enlist himself in the service of some other woman. In many parts of Italy, every woman has her *cicisbeo*. No one can presume to imagine, that a handsome young fellow, who is admitted at all hours and all seasons to his mistress's closet, can have any other designs than his friend's good and honour at heart. The husband is *cicisbeo* to some other lady: and thus the grand trade of gallantry is carried on. Here, the women are at liberty to follow the unconstrained inclinations of their hearts. In Spain and Portugal, the jealous and suspicious husband locks up his wife, and is secure: if she escapes but an hour from him, he is sure of what follows. Eternal restraint heightens desire, and banishes reserve. A gallant is seldom made unhappy by a refusal. It is this knowledge of the sex, that makes me so cautious of trusting them. It may be productive of much good, or much misery, to me. Hence it was that I told you, I might have imbibed wrong principles, and drawn false conclusions.—“ Who
“ is the most virtuous woman breathing?—She,
“ whom constitution hath made the most volup-
“ tuous,

“tuous, and reason the coldest of all women.”
 —This is the opinion of a celebrated author.—
 There may be such women, but I never met one
 of them yet; and when I do meet them, how
 shall I find it out? There is but one method left
 for me; that is, to make a trial of that virtue.
 Congreve very truly and wittily says,

He alone won't betray, in whom none will confide:
 And the nymph may be chaste, that has never
 been try'd.

It is that trial I want to make. But don't
 mistake me: it must be the consequence of the
 strongest affection, when I do it. When I think
 I meet a woman worthy of my love, then I make
 that trial of her virtue that will, if she keeps the
 field, prove her deserving of me. To her I shall
 devote the rest of my days, and pass my life in
 security and felicity. Upon no other account
 would I take the trouble: but I would not take
 it, even then, if not perfectly well assured, that
 she loved me as well as I did her. There is no
 merit in resisting what we do not like: the diffi-
 culty is, in not submitting to the impulse of our
 passions. To try whether she can withstand the
 temptation of a beloved object, is an attempt
 that I should desire to make with the woman
 who is to be my wife. I would only employ the
 arts of seduction: I would make no promises,
 and would consequently break none: she should
 not have the pretence of yielding to me through
 her reliance on my promises: let passion and in-
 clination have fair play. I would never attempt
 to use a force and violence that must shock the
 fair, and is contrary to the very essence of love.

Beauty,

Beauty, by constraint possessing,
You enjoy but half the blessing,
Lifeless charms without the heart.

This then, my friend, is my life, my opinion, and my design.—It is from hence that you have heard me treat the fair sex with such levity; and talk of them, as you call it, so disrespectfully. Tell me, if I have not a sufficient cause. But do you, if you can, alter my notions, and subvert my opinions. I am ever ready to hear the voice of reason, and am still open to conviction. After thus, as I have honestly related to you, having passed my life without being affected by a sincere passion, I am now so thoroughly charmed by the innocent beauty of the dear Harriet, that I could almost find in my heart to marry her to-morrow, were my scruples and suspicions properly removed.—There is an openness in her countenance, and an ingenuousness in her manner, that half persuades me she is the woman I have been looking for. But—“Frailty, thy name is woman.” Give me thy advice, Simpson. I open my heart to your view. Serve me as the Turks say the angel Gabriel did Mahomet: who took his heart from his breast, and wiping the black spot away which is on every man’s heart, put it in its place again. Treat me thus: for, he should have no spot on his heart, who is worthy to be the husband of Harriet Nicolls, and thy friend: which, believe me, I truly am.

CHARLES HORTON.

L E T.

LETTER XVIII.

TO CHARLES HORTON, Esq:

I RECEIVED your packet — and, at last, have attained the end of it. I confess it took me up some time; and I was frequently in doubt, after I had once laid it down, whether ever I should resume it to finish it: but my regard for your interest, not so much as my curiosity, urged me to learn what were the conclusions you could possibly draw for a series of actions like yours: and I find you are like a man in a jaundice, to whose eye every object appears yellow, because it is through a medium of that colour he sees them. You are wrong in the position which you establish as the foundation of that pretty superstructure you endeavour to raise upon it. You say nature is uniform: always the same. I deny that it is so in the human species, whatever fixed laws she may have for the vegetable system, or the brute creation. Our faces are not more different than our minds; as in our external appearances are many deformities, and some are more remarkably deformed than others; so are there many whose souls are so warped from the love of virtue, that, could we see them personified, we should find them more crooked and shapeless than those objects, whom we never meet without pitying them. If nature was uniform, there would be no distinction between virtue and vice: we should have no such thing as handsome or ordinary people: we should be like the Chinese, whose faces are all alike;

alike; and our passions and inclinations would be all the same. You have studied nature very partially, my friend; and among the many volumes she unfolds to the eye, I am afraid you have picked out the worst, and most useless. I do not doubt, but the stories that you have related to me are facts, and the characters of the heroines of them will not serve to recommend their persons: but, sure, it would be presumptuous to say, that all women are equally vicious: there is not even a probability that it should be so. Because you have eaten tainted meat once or twice in your life, must it necessarily follow, that all the meat which you see is stinking and putrid? You have the greatest reason to suppose the contrary. In one instance you have acted praise-worthily; in your behaviour to that mistaken girl, who was induced to believe you were fond of her, because you endeavoured to make her think so—"It belongs only to such as have a great propensity to vice, to practise great virtues."—I am very glad, for your sake, that you had sufficient resolution to practise the virtue of forbearance upon that occasion; and honestly enough, not to take from her that peace of mind, you could never have restored her. With stronger passions than men, with less fortitude and understanding to resist them, and more liable to temptation, which is seldom or never wanting, is it so extraordinary that women often fall into the pit that is dug for them? yet, it is my opinion, that they behave themselves much better than we should do in similar circumstances.—"The want of understanding in most women, is entirely owing to their want of education:" and to the want of that, I may add, is owing their ignorance of their moral

moral duties, and the importance of them. A virtuous and a good education is the foundation of the happiness of a woman's life : it points out to her the road she should follow ; it teaches her to distinguish between good and evil ; and gives her a power of making a proper choice : it shews her the necessity of adhering to the laws which virtue has prescribed for her ; and from the usefulness and propriety of them, she is enticed to follow them. There are some hearts so depraved, I must acknowledge, that they will not be confined within such bounds ; but, like deer, who break out from a park, when they once pass the pale, their ruin is inevitable. Nor is the depravity of the present age much to be wondered at : I am rather surprized it is no worse.

- Audax omnia perpeti
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.

The impression we receive from books is never to be eradicated. Our youth, of both sexes, are much given to read those works of fancy which they call Novels : they had their origin from Esop's Fables ; which, though they only discover the sentiments of beasts, as it is supposed, conceal and contain some excellent morals. This was cheating people into wisdom. The Saviour of mankind did not disdain to teach his disciples, and his auditors, by parables. A Novel, which should be but a continued allegory, inculcating some good lesson, some moral truth, would be a proper and a rational entertainment for young

- * The race of man, presumptuous enough to dare every thing, rushes on through forbidden wickedness.

people.

people. Such have been written, and they are very meritorious works. But will you believe me, when I tell you, that there have lately appeared some works of this kind—that dishonour human nature, and disgrace the society where they are suffered to be read? I met with one of them the other day. The author, who calls his work *Sentimental*, seems to be a very proper and industrious agent of the enemy of mankind: his sentiments, if any he has, are so finely drawn out, that they break at last; he may be called, the *Spinner of Sentiments*. But you, what would even you say to a man, who should openly avow, that he thinks adultery no crime, and at the same time should attempt to persuade his readers to think so too? What would be your opinion of the man, who, instead of adding to the natural deformity of vice, dresses her out in the most alluring garb, and tempts the passengers to her arms: who, in the public streets, stands pimp to iniquity: who takes away the barriers from female honour, pride and modesty: the first he destroys, by shewing that it is inconsistent with pleasure; the latter, by corrupting the hearts and minds by the most voluptuous and shocking descriptions: who opens the road to infamy, and makes plain the way to destruction: who laughs at the most solemn of all engagements, the marriage vow; the plighted faith of two virtuous hearts at the altar, is but matter of ridicule to him, who teaches us to slight every duty that may interfere with the pursuit of vicious pleasure, and that the gratification of the grossest and most sensual appetites, is but the call of nature, which must be obeyed: who desires to take away the thorn of remorse, which is hidden under the rose
of

of criminal pleasure, and which pierces you after it is gathered: who addresses his works to the glowing imaginations of the young and ignorant: who seduces the heart, by misleading the judgment, and vitiating the understanding. There is such a man—But this is only a private mischief. If I look upon him in a political light, he is an enemy to society. The depravity of our natures, our proneness to evil, renders it necessary that there should be certain rules and laws established for the good government of society.

The man who teaches, and puts us in a way to escape the penalties which those laws would inflict upon us for the breach of them, shews us how inefficacious human restrictions are, to bind wicked and corrupted spirits: he destroys our manners, and we despise the laws.

* *Quid leges sine moribus.
Vanæ proficiunt?*

Human are founded upon divine laws: by overturning the former, you undermine the latter. The consequence will be, that if this author continues to indulge the world with his labours, we shall soon be released from that foolish and absurd reverence which we pay to the virtuous customs or regulations of our ancestors: he will banish that delusive mist that clouded and obscured our senses, and restore us to what he calls the day of reason and truth. Then take care, ye fair ones, the muzzle will be taken from restraint;

* Of what efficacy are empty laws, without morals to enforce them?

and

and your persons will be free as the author's notions. The bands of society are dissolved: you have no where to fly to for relief, but to the hand of brutal power; and that is turned against you. One great service he will do the young people of this generation: he will give them a good idea of intrigue; teach them not to miss proper opportunities; shew what encouragement is sufficient from a woman, and what tokens of love from a man: in short, I never knew such a thorough-paced and complete pander. Perhaps it is because the author declares himself to be a foreigner, that his works are encouraged. I hope he is so.—In that case, I shall return my thanks to heaven, that this country has not produced so degenerate a son, who employs his time and talents in vitiating and corrupting the hearts and morals of his brethren and sisters. In offering my sentiments and opinion upon the evil tendency of this man's publications, the example and authority of Rousseau has been opposed to them, in the favourite novel of *Eloisa*: but I apprehend they misunderstand the author, who was a man of sense and a philosopher; who was neither a libertine himself, nor did he encourage loose notions in others: whatever his religious opinions might be, he always paid great respect to moral virtue; and shews the beauty of it through every part of his work. Rousseau saw, with concern, that the married women abroad, who, while they were maidens, had a due and proper attention to their honour; as soon as they got husbands, used to entertain and encourage gallants. He judged, very properly, that of the two evils, less mischief could happen to the community in general from a single woman's indulging a criminal passion, than

than one who is married. With this design he wrote. He shews, that though Eloisa, from the violence of her love, suffered her favourite to proceed to too great lengths; yet, when her father had given her an husband, she made her inclination subservient to her duty: that she filled the offices of wife and mother with tenderness and affection; and though, at first, she did not love the man who was possessed of her hand, yet the respect she had for the sacred engagements she had entered into, stifled every unlawful desire she might have otherwise formed. By this conduct, she preserved her husband's honour and domestic peace; was deserving of his regard, and became the worthy mistress of an happy family, and a chaste and virtuous wife. This was her conduct after marriage. He would have the character of the woman, who encourages lovers after marriage, put in opposition to this: and she is directly the contrary. Every tie of mutual regard is broken through: nothing but distrust and hatred succeed. No man will regard children, whom he does not believe to be his own: the confidence he should have in his wife, and the fondness he would naturally feel for his infants, are not to be met with: she bestows disgrace on her husband, and brings infamy on herself. It was to the scandalous customs that prevail on the continent, that Rousseau intended to give a check: how far he succeeded, your own account, of your adventures, will enable you to determine. I once more repeat, that I am not surprized at the depravity of the people in this age: and I wonder we do not hear, if possible, of more breaches of the matrimonial

matrimonial contract, when it is so beset, and rendered despicable on all sides. This may be, in part, the cause of the absurd opinions you have embraced; and your continuance in them will most probably occasion you much unhappiness. Prejudice runs away with you. In the life of the worthy clergyman, you found all that domestic happiness which charmed you so much, that you could not help secretly wishing to enjoy it yourself. Ignorant of those paths of wickedness and debauchery that you trod in, he was assured of the fidelity of his wife. You, who have been acquainted with the worse part of the sex, cannot have courage to repose your honour in that of your wife; nor have you that honest confidence which is the companion of virtue. Juba wishes to live in ignorance of the world, if, by the acquisition of the knowledge of it, he should become a villain. You, if you want to be happy, should wish that you had not known so much of the bad part of the world. You cannot wash away the remembrance of those scenes you have been so principal an actor in; and, lest the same should happen to you, are eternally miserable. This is one consequence of indulging the passions: and a young man, by leading too free a life, only lays in a stock of suspicion, that renders him unhappy all the rest of his days. I heartily wish you could wean yourself from those false opinions, and erroneous positions, you have so long cherished, and laid down as the rules of your conduct, to follow the steps of that good man; whose felicity, by your own account, you both envied and admired. But what will be the result of the intended trial you design to make of the virtue of the woman that is to be your wife? What end will

will it answer? If you love her truly, you cannot think so unworthily of her, as to imagine you can seduce her. But you say, that is not your intention. If you should find her inclinable to listen to you, in consequence of the passion you hope to inspire her with, and she treats you kindly, you will ungenerously despise her, because she loves you better than you deserve. If she refuses to listen to your solicitation, you will be no wiser than you are at present. And can you think, after attempting her chastity, she will ever marry you? I should despise her if she did. You are like that foolish man, who, not satisfied with seeing the reflection of himself in a mirror, broke it, to know what was behind it. The sex are weak enough, and sufficiently liable to errors, without being obliged to resist the most powerful temptations. You know not, Horton, the fidelity of a woman, of a virtuous woman. I have known it, and therefore I can speak from experience. I will soon sit down, and write you an account of myself. I will give you an history that shall surprize you. In the mean time, drop those schemes which you are erecting, equally against this girl's peace, and your own. And, to tell you the truth, I do not think I should be guilty of a breach of friendship, if I revealed your design to her. I cannot but acknowledge, that I admire your moderation. How vastly kind it is, to abstain from using violence! I fancy the wretch that you were about to murder, would be more obliged to you to cut his throat at once, than to keep him dying a month. The *coup de grace* is the most welcome stroke to a criminal extended on the wheel. Read this letter several times, and you will find I am, Your friend,

EDWARD SIMPSON.

L E T.

To Miss WEBSTER.

I AM much afraid, Lucy, that your intelligence is come too late. If you designed it to guard me against the attractions of Mr. Horton, it certainly is. If you design to put your brother's character, so well known, and generally admired, in opposition to his, you will not succeed.—But, Lucy, is it not an extraordinary thing, that one cannot be seen by these men, but they must begin to wish for one?—I will be sworn, Lucy, I had no more notion of having your brother for a Philander, than I had of being queen of England. And so you tell me, my swain is a rake. I have heard much of that kind of animals, but I never saw one. However, if Mr. Horton is a rake, he is a very civil sober one. I imagined, by what I had heard of them, that they were like the pictures we have of the devil, with a long tail, sawcer eyes, large horns, and cloven feet; by which sign being thoroughly known, they served as a signal to all honest and virtuous maidens to keep away from them. I have been considering Mr. Horton very attentively, but cannot, for the life of me, see any thing like it about him. On the contrary, I see a genteel person, an handsome face, a polite and easy address, a constant and engaging attention to me, and an agreeable sprightliness. 'Tis true, at some times I catch him sighing; and when he looks at me, his eyes assume a softness and tenderness that are very

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pleasing; but they speak a language that is very easily to be understood, though I am determined that it shall not be intelligible to me. If these are the signs of a rake and a libertine, I believe that Mr. Horton is an abominable one. I wonder all men are not rakes, if it makes them so agreeable; but, Lucy, is it not a matter of pride (a circumstance that adds greatly to one's honour) to have one of these rakes in one's chains? Does it not signify that one has a superiority of charms?—But then, to fix him one's own; what a triumph!—Is it not worth running the risque of a battle for?—I am going on rather too far. I fancy that I should be a loser by the contest, and had much better decline it. He is a dangerous enemy to cope with,—especially when he is armed with humility; and all the weapons he uses are sighs and supplications. I have been very much upon my guard lately, and have kept close to Mrs. Allen. He has had no opportunity to talk to me, except in her company. His eyes accuse me frequently, but I do not mind that. I endeavour to recover my spirits as much as possible. The first appearance of this terrible man almost frightened me out of them. I used to be merry and chearful before he came to Elwood, and know no reason why I should not be so now. I see Mr. Horton thoughtful very frequently, and wish to know what he is thinking about.—I am not at all angry with you, my dear Lucy: I apply to you for advice. You should give it to me: you are better acquainted with the world than I am; have been in London, and have known more people than I have done; therefore, your giving me your advice is doing me a favour. When I refuse to follow

how it, then you shall forbear giving it to me: for it is the best compliment I can pay to your opinion, to comply with what you direct me to do. But notwithstanding all I may have said here in jest concerning Mr. Horton, the description you have given me of him terrifies—and that of your brother affects me.—What can I, what shall I do? You know, Lucy, I have told you every thing, and have opened the state of my heart to you. I cannot help looking upon Mr. Horton with the eye of partiality; and, from every thing I have seen of him, he is deserving of it. I could wish that your brother had fixed his affections on a more worthy object; one who could have returned his passion.—It might be better for me if I could controul my inclinations; but that is impossible.—I am indulging a vain hope, and am following a delusive light, that will lead me, I fear, to destruction. Extend your saving arm, Lucy; tell me how I shall demean myself: on thy advice and counsel I will depend for safety. Can you extricate me from those snares I am entangled in? I doubt your power, and my struggling only binds me the faster. Farewel, Lucy. Pity your unhappy friend,

HARRIET NICOLLS.

LETTER XX.

To the SAME.

IFANCY, Lucy, you will delay your counsel, till there will be no necessity for it. A small time will make such an alteration in affairs, that I don't know what may be the consequence. Who can always resist the continual assiduities and solicitations of an amiable young man?—Is it possible to be on ones guard every moment,—especially when the heart takes part with the person who implores your kindness?—I told you, that Mr. Horton had seemed to be uneasy, and was rather displeased, at my continuing so constantly with Mrs. Allen: he wore a discontent and chagrin on his countenance, that was very perceptible. If I had endeavoured to guess at the cause, I might have gone very near it, I believe: however, I did not attempt it. He gave out, as an excuse for his being dull and low-spirited, that he had a violent head-ach; but proposed going to take a ride in the afternoon.—He accordingly went. I made myself secure of his absence. “I will indulge myself,” said I, “with a solitary walk.—I will put on my hat, “and go down to the Hermitage.” It was one of the pleasantest evenings we had experienced for a long time. I own to you, Lucy, though Autumn comes with Winter in its train, that it is more pleasing to me than the heat and glare of Summer, or the shewy blossoms of Spring.

The

The air had that delightful temperature, which gives satisfaction to the sense. The sun was on the decline, and faintly cast his beams on the trees, already diversified with variety of different shaded leaves, and heightened the colour of all. I assure you, I wished for you to unbosom myself to. I considered how much I should profit by your counsel and assistance. Though Mrs. Allen cannot know my thoughts, I act very often as if she could, and feel myself constrained by her presence. I was then alone, and had the liberty of thinking as I pleased. Is it necessary to inform you what was the subject of my cogitations? They were such as you will blame me for; but I cannot help being very sensible of Mr. Horton's perfections. I sauntered along, deep in the midst of a thousand schemes, equally foolish and impracticable, and found myself at the Hermitage, before I was aware of it. I never recollect to have seen the vale which it overlooks appear so beautifully romantic, as it did at that moment. You will tell me, that my head is turned. My imagination very often represents things to me in a light, that, I believe, they appear in to nobody else. It may often add to my unhappiness; but it also very frequently increases my pleasure. I may thank Sir Thomas's library for this turn my thoughts have taken.—You have said, that I read too much; and I may be induced by-and-by to believe you: but I have nothing else to amuse myself with. I intended to indulge myself a little longer with the view of the opposite hill, where so many rural beauties spread themselves to the sight!—Woods rising over woods, reflected in the gentle stream that glides at the feet of them!—A farm-house, the

feat of ignorance and content, with the ricks of the newly brought-home harvest, happily variegated the scene!—I could not help wishing myself fixed with the man I love in such a peaceful retirement.—I turned about to go into the hovel and rest myself, and give a loose to the ideal pleasures that might arise from the consequence of that wish being gratified. I saw a paper lying on the floor. I took it up. It had not the appearance of being a letter, nor was it sealed. I thought I had the privilege of opening it. I did so, and found it was some of Mr. Horton's writing.—It was the following sonnet :

The bird who loves the silent night,
 And shuns the blaze of day,
 To some lone covert wings his flight,
 And warbles from the spray ;
 While, thro' the wide-resounding grove,
 He tells a tale of slighted love.

From human converse thus I fly,
 To solitude, forlorn,
 And, far from ev'ry curious eye,
 My hapless lot I mourn ;
 Condemn'd by cruel fate to prove
 The woes that wait on hopeless love.

The bursting sigh, the artless tale,
 The agonizing tear,
 Nor heart just broken, can avail
 To win her pitying ear.
 How shall I her compassion move,
 To ease my pain, and meet my love ?

With

With all my pow'r I strive, in vain,
 To chase her from my mind ;
 I see her,—and I hug my chain,
 To misery resign'd ;
 And wretched thro' the plains I rove,
 The victim of successless love.

You are too well acquainted with my fondness for poetry, not to suppose that I was extremely well pleased with this *petit morceau*. Do not think that I answer Hudibras's description :

She, who by poetry is won,
 Is like a desk to write upon.

That alone would not win me ; but I confess that I think it an addition to every other accomplishment. I am sure a poet must have a very tender heart, or he could never describe the force of the passions so very affectingly ; and when he is really unhappy, he must feel, from his delicacy of sentiment, and unfortunate excess of sensibility, twice more than any other man would feel in the same situation. I say, poetry alone would not win my heart, but it would go a great way towards it. Mr. Doddsley, in his Preface to Mr. Shenstone's Work, says, " That sweet
 " Pastoral in four parts, which has been so uni-
 " versally admired, one would have thought
 " must have subdued the softest heart, and soft-
 " ened the most obdurate." I think so too ; and am very glad that Mr. Shenstone did not know me, or send me such an elegant poem : I cannot tell what would have been the consequence.——Reading my Foundling a second time (for I was too much hurried and confused

to understand it perfectly at first) I heard the sound of feet approaching hastily towards me. I started up ; but by the time I had got to the door, I met Mr. Horton.

“ Oh ! Mr. Horton, I thought you had been gone to take a ride.”

“ So I intended, my dear Miss Nicolls ; but I dropped a paper here, which I came back to look for ; but you have found it.” (for it was still in my hand) “ It is a rough sketch of some of my distracted thoughts, and not worth your perusal.”

To say the truth, it had the appearance of a rough copy.—There were some alterations and interlineations ; but that might be done designedly.

“ I found it, Mr. Horton, and hope you will give me leave to keep it.”

“ It is not worth it, unless it had some effect upon your behaviour.—I suppose you are at no loss to guess to whom it is addressed.”

“ I really am, sir.—It is not to be supposed that I can know whom you mean.”

“ Ah ! Miss Nicolls, this is a wilful ignorance. I could only mean you by it.”

“ Now, sir, I see you mean to laugh at me.”

“ By every sacred power,” said he, “ I do not. It is only of your neglect and coldness I complain. I had once an opportunity of just opening my heart to you ; and since then, you have most industriously avoided me. I have seen it, Harriet, and have severely felt the effects of your reserve ; and can no longer exist without telling you how sincerely and ardently I love you.”

“ Take

“ Take care, Mr. Horton,” said I, “ how
“ you say so. You ought to consider your own
“ heart, before you make that declaration,
“ which I cannot hear, consistently with my
“ duty and gratitude to your father.—I need
“ not explain myself any farther.”—I offered to
leave him.

“ You shall not stir,” said he, taking my
hand, “ till I assure you, in the most solemn
“ manner, that my heart never knew another
“ mistress:—that to you alone it is dedi-
“ cated.”

“ I shall be expected, sir, at tea. I beg you
“ will let me go to the house.”

It was necessary by this time.—I could support
it no longer : I trembled so, I could scarcely stand.
He perceived my agitation.

“ You are not able to go by yourself. Com-
“ pose yourself a little, and not treat a matter so
“ lightly, on which the future happiness of my
“ life depends.”

“ I cannot, must not think seriously of any
“ thing of that kind. I again intreat you to let
“ me go. Some servant, somebody or another
“ may discover me here along with you, and it
“ will be looked upon as a preconcerted meet-
“ ing.—Let me once more beg that you will let
“ me go.”

“ Why do you wish to depart, lovely Har-
“ riet?—Cannot you stay for a few moments?
“ —Little I have to say, and in a short time you
“ can answer me. I never truly loved any one
“ woman before I saw you : my heart has submit-
“ ted to the power of your charms : I adore you :
“ I am unhappy when from you, and miserable
“ when with you, to see you so regardless of me.

“ Let me only ask you, if it is possible to win
“ your heart ?”

“ That is a question I cannot resolve at present, sir ; but this is not the way to win it.—I
“ am not to be surprized into affection.—I must
“ and will go home.”

I forced myself from him.—He was too dangerous a friend to confide in, and an enemy too formidable not to be in dread of. I staggered towards the house ; for it could not properly be called walking. I never enjoyed so much satisfaction as when I reached my own chamber ; and was scarce tolerably composed, when I was summoned to tea. Mr. Horton, who saw, and, I believe, pitied my confusion, did not come in till after tea. He had recovered his head-ach ; but there was a languor and concern in his countenance, that plainly bespoke his disappointment and mortification. Somebody calling Sir Thomas Horton out about business, and Mrs. Allen following him, we were left alone.

“ I am convinced,” said he to me abruptly,
“ that you hate and despise me. I laid that plan
“ to see and speak to you in private. You have
“ seemed, and really endeavoured to shun me, for
“ some time past. I thought my absence might
“ have induced you to quit Mrs. Allen’s protection for a little time, and was not mistaken ;
“ but you are equally cool and indifferent in private as in public, and all the fruit of that scheme
“ has been, that I am more fully ascertained of
“ your contempt of me.”

“ You mistake me, sir.—I never can either
“ hate or despise the son of Sir Thomas Horton,
“ my father and my benefactor ; and I am bound
“ to look on you with respect and gratitude, instead of contempt and hatred.”

“ It

“ It is not on my father’s merits I wish to plume myself ; it is not for his sake I hope to be esteemed by you ; it is for my own.—But you treat me with undissembled indifference, and I am hopeless and wretched.”

Mrs. Allen came into the parlour, and he ceased talking on that subject, or indeed on any other, and remained silent and uneasy. Had it been proper or consistent, I could have been very glad to have had an opportunity of releasing him from his uncertainty, and telling him, that he alone is formed to make me happy ; but that I cannot do : he pursues me incessantly. The character you have given me of him frightens me : I know not how to trust him. Scarcely five months acquainted with him, what would he think of me should I confess to him the state of my heart ; besides, I can by no means be assured that he loves me : his behaviour, and his words, tell me so ; but if he is not sincere, what misery should I suffer, if he should be acquainted with my inclination for him, and should avoid me afterwards ?—What shall I do to satisfy myself ? How shall I contrive to know whether this affection he has for me, as he says, is real or not ?—Can I devise no means of finding it out ?—Assist me, Lucy, upon this occasion : the welfare of your friend depends upon it.—Answer me soon, as you esteem your sincere and affectionate

HARRIET NICOLLS.

L E T-

LETTER XXI.

To Miss HARRIET NICOLLS.

I AM a very improper person to give you that advice you require, my much esteemed friend. I cannot tell you what step is best for you to take.—He appears to act in the manner you would expect and wish a man to do, who hopes to be in possession of your heart; yet that doubt you entertain of his sincerity, is but very natural and very proper. Our incautions sex, relying too much upon appearances, is often deceived: but how are we to find out the truth?—It is very difficult to come at.—A notion has just popped into my head, that may be productive of some good to you.—My brother has been threatening, this week past, to go to Elwood. I suppose it will not be long before he pays you a visit. If you have a mind to try your lover, you may appear to pay a greater attention to my brother than usual. See whether Mr. Horton will be jealous, try how he will behave: there can be no harm in a little coquetry,—in a little innocent deception. You will be enabled to see the force and the sincerity of his passion, by the manner in which he takes your behaviour. Though my brother may be the only sufferer in consequence of your deportment, yet I would rather let him feel a little for a time, than my sweet friend should be unhappy all her life: for surely that must be the consequence of your knowing that Mr. Horton did not regard you, when your affections are fixed upon him.—Let your eyes lose their coldness and indifference to my brother: let
your

your manner and your language be altered from what it has hitherto been. I know you esteem him as a friend: appear then as if you were kind to a lover. It will be but the deception of an hour, and may produce the most important discoveries. I cannot afford time to write you a long letter, being engaged in doing a deal of business for myself. There is to be a masked ball at Sir Robert Wotton's, and I am preparing a dress for myself. There is some coolness between their family and that at Elwood, or I suppose you would be invited likewise. It would add to my happiness to see you there, my dear Harriet, though your charms would eclipse us all: but as I am not much troubled with envy, should rejoice in being a witness of that general adoration that would be most undoubtedly paid to your superior beauty. This is an odd acknowledgment for a girl, not accounted intolerable herself, to make: but I have been always accustomed to tell truth, and cannot disguise my sentiments even upon this occasion.—Nor am I less sincere, when I assure you that I am, most truly,

Your affectionate friend,

L. WEBSTER.

L E T.

LETTER XXII.

TO EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq;

I MET in your letter, my friend, those reprehensions which I expected and deserved: but prejudice will not listen to the voice of reason, nor will conviction follow the most powerful arguments: else, how have blindness, bigotry, and superstition in the heathen world, been able to oppose the unnerving truths of revealed religion? I am superstitious to a degree: and cannot persuade myself to think that I am wrong, in endeavouring to put in execution those schemes I have formed for the happiness of my future life. Without making that trial of the chastity of the woman whom I intend for my wife, I shall never be happy. Let what will be the consequence afterwards, if I believe her to be such as I would wish her, whether she is so or not, I shall be contented. You need not be afraid that the lady will be so much offended with me, as to banish all hopes and prospect of a reconciliation. It was the opinion of man who had much greater experience of the sex than I can pretend to, that no woman was ever angry in her heart with the man who offered to pay her such a compliment. I really love this girl, and find her essentially necessary to my future happiness. She is worthy to be beloved. But can you blame me, if I try a suit of cloaths on before I wear them, to see whether they will fit me or no? an habit that I am to be exposed in every day of my life ought to be exactly suited to my

my

my shape, before I venture to appear in it. A man is laughed at for the fault of his taylor: but it is his own fault if he is rendered ridiculous by the conduct of his wife. I intend to try her: and a fiery trial it will be. From thenceforward, adieu to every idle, vain suspicion: my confidence in her shall be as unrestrained, as unconfined, as my fondness and affection for her. Is not this all reasonable, Simpson? When I am about to buy an horse, I am allowed to mount him, to try his paces, to leap him, to make myself, if I can, master of his temper and disposition. As he stands in the market, a fine shape may cover a multitude of defects; but when he is put in motion, they discover themselves. In the traffic of courtship between the sexes, for, believe me, Simpson, it is only a trade, where the fairest and best-looking goods are exposed to view, to conceal those of an inferior quality and worse appearance; in this traffic, it is impossible to strip the real sentiments of an assumed disguise. The lover, and his mistress, equally pretend to virtues and agreeable qualifications which they do not really possess, in order to render themselves more estimable in the eyes of each other. What is the consequence? with this mutual delusive deception they are wedded: the man grows sour and ill-tempered: the woman, sulky and cross. He flies to company and the bottle for relief from her: and she throws herself into the arms of some other man to get rid of her husband. This then is the *denouement* of the whole affair. They are both made miserable. Whereas, had they but known ever so little of each other before, this had never happened. This is the opinion you condemn so much: but though I defend it, I will confess to you I think

think the trial rather hazardous. And what would I not venture to ensure myself happiness and content? With regard to the amiable Harriet, I have very many scruples. She is possessed of such a natural honesty, such a pure simplicity, such an undesigning ingenuousness, that I am half inclined to try my fate with her. I am sure my father would have no objection to my marrying her. Too fond of me to thwart my wishes in a point so material, I could venture to be confident of his consent; but I could never think of asking it, 'till I was convinced of being in possession of the heart and inclinations of the dear girl: but that is a secret yet to me.—I pretended a few evenings ago, to take a ride; expecting she would come from under my aunt's wing, where she has taken shelter from my assiduous desire to please her, and to draw her into a private conversation, for a long time. I was not disappointed. She went alone to visit a favourite seat of hers at the bottom of the garden, which really commands a beautiful view. There I dropped, as if accidentally, a few rhimes I had strung: she found them, as it was intended she should; and, while she was reading them, I appeared before her. I told her my passion for her, but could obtain no other declaration from her, but that of respect and gratitude. She appeared to be infinitely distressed by my conversation; and, in pity to her confusion and fear of being discovered with me, I suffered her to go. If I had not the joy of learning her heart was mine, I had the satisfaction to find that she did not prefer any body to me. I know at this moment, no greater pleasure, nor can well conceive any greater, than to be certain that I was beloved by that charming girl. I am tempted,

ed, at some times, to believe that she does not think amiss of me; but her coolness, at other times, nips the blossoms of hope, and I am as much at a loss as ever. Her caution seems to be the result of prudential fear, not of hatred and contempt. By some means or other her sentiments of me must be learned. I should have found them out long ago, if she had called in art to her assistance: but I am no match for the operations of undisguised nature. Had she been bred in town, I should not have delayed so long the confessing my partiality for her. Every girl, from the moment she gets into her teens, is accustomed to hear that story. It is more difficult to overcome the mere reserve of a virtuous country girl, than to get the entire possession of a town-bred lady. Thus then I stand at present with my little girl. I know I shall receive a lesson from you about her; but will not, if I can help it, do any thing that shall wrong your opinion of me. Your favourite divine, that I met with in Suffex, is coming into this neighbourhood. His wife and family are coming with him too. Do not be surprized when you come down to Elwood: I will introduce you to him. He will stay a great while with us too. This must be unriddled to you. Our old incumbent died last week: he had been too infirm, for some time, to perform his duty; and his curate, who was a distant relation of his, had undertaken the care of the parish. He was much disliked: and his application to my father, who had no good opinion of him, though he never objected to him out of compliment to the old gentleman while he lived, was taken very little notice of. I knew nothing of this transaction, when my father, at breakfast,

fast, told me, with a smile, that he intended to make me a present of four hundred pounds a year. I replied I was greatly obliged to him; that he was always heaping favours on me, but that I did not want it.

"No, Charles, you will not be able to enjoy this present yourself; but I am convinced you will let us all partake of it with you."

"I do not understand you, Sir." He then informed me of the whole matter.

"Now," said he, "whom will you recommend?"

My worthy Suffex friend came into my head directly. I had told my father how I happened to know him, and had praised him with a great deal of truth. "Well, Sir, I believe I can promise you much satisfaction from this present you have made me. You have heard me speak of Mr. Atkinson. If you will permit me to introduce him to you."

"I have too good an opinion of you to think you would recommend an improper person: send for him directly. As his family is large, it will be expensive to him to move; so send him, at the same time, some money to bear his travelling charges."

I was never better pleased with a task in my life. I ordered a servant to be ready, and went to write to him. The man is just returned with his answer: it is such a one as gratitude and honest politeness can dictate. He only waits till another curate can be provided, and then he will come to Elwood to thank his benefactors. It gives me infinite pleasure to have this opportunity of shewing how much I esteem the worthy Atkinson; and am sure my father will be very much pleased

pleased with his doctrine and his manner. It shall be my business to take care of some of his children for him. I have not heard from Williams of a long time. Do you see him often? You will find enclosed a letter of my father's, with the remainder of the sum he promised him. You may add your mite: mine accompanies my father's. This will make him happy and easy in his circumstances, and I hope establish him in the world. Farewell, my good friend. I shall impatiently expect the history you promise to favour me with. Once more, adieu.

CHARLES HORTON.

L. E. T.

LETTER XXIII.

To Miss WEBSTER.

MY dear Lucy's advice to me may be very good: but how shall I follow it, without dismissing that sincerity that has ever marked my actions, and turning hypocrite? I shall never be able to do it. Besides, I shall give encouragement to your brother, which I never meant to do; and perhaps may give uneasiness to an heart that truly loves me. This conduct will make me despicable in the eyes of Mr. Horton; and if his hatred should be the consequence of it, I should deserve it. This cannot be an innocent deception, when I carry all the appearance of guilt with me; yet, as it is but the one trial, my curiosity may induce me to make it. If any thing bad happens from it, all the blame shall be laid on you, Lucy. I assure you, I do not attempt it with pleasure; and am fearful of departing from that sincerity to which I have hitherto adhered: yet I am strongly tempted to see how Mr. Horton will bear the apparent preference I shall give to another. If he takes it with ease and carelessness, I shall be a judge of the force of his passion: if he does not, I will put him out of his pain the first time he addresses me. I have expected your brother with a disagreeable impatience. I take a resolution one moment to put your scheme in practice; but the next, am determined to do no such thing. I do not believe I shall be able to fix upon it till the time come: it is near at hand, for I
see

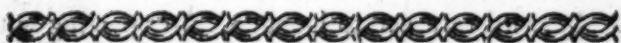
see Mr. Webster in the garden. Must I go down? With me success: you point out the road, and should pray that it might conduct me to happiness——.

It is all over, Lucy.—I have played a part I am not at all calculated for.—The people of the house are retired to rest, and I am seated to scribble to you.—I went down to receive your brother, and found him with Mr. Horton: they have a slight acquaintance. Mr. Horton wished to have improved it, as I have heard him speak frequently in his praise. What prevented their being more intimate? you will naturally ask. It comes into my head that I did. Your brother, from his intimacy with me, owing to the long acquaintance I have had both with you and him, is looked upon by Mr. Horton in the light of a rival. This I am led to imagine, from his never courting his company more, and being very uneasy when he has been here, which has been very seldom. Whether my address to your brother was too familiar, or so totally different from the manner I am accustomed to salute Mr. Horton in, I know not: but I am sure it had a visible effect on him. His countenance was almost instantly changed. I pretended to heed it not. It is impossible to tell you particularly every step I took; but my triumph was complete.—The concern, the uneasiness of Mr. Horton, was but too visible; and his attempts to disguise his pain, only rendered it more apparent. I pitied his awkward situation from my heart; however, if he really loves, amends shall be made him for this trouble that I have given him.—His eyes never met mine after your brother's departure: he sat silent and thoughtful for the
most

most part. At some few intervals he burst out into immoderate and unnatural fits of laughter. As he had no cause for indulging his mirth, I was terrified at his behaviour. He did not address himself at all to me; and I had no opportunity of convincing him that I was sorry for what I had done, and would gladly have made it up with him. He retired very early, and perhaps is employed as I am.—But little sleep this night for me.—I tremble, Lucy, for the consequent troubles this deceit may bring me into.—One inevitable one is, that if he should shun me, angry and incensed at this preference that I appear to give your brother, I shall be obliged to sacrifice my decorum, and my sex's pride, and confess my weakness, to be reinstated in his good opinion.—And if he should still own himself unable to bear the chain, I must endeavour to make it lighter to him, and take part of it myself.—I should be much better pleased with the latter, where he should give me an opportunity himself of opening my heart to him. The former would shock me very much; but, dreadful as that step would be to me, I should be reduced to the necessity of taking it.—I perceive, too late, an imprudence I cannot remedy; and wish, with lady Randolph, that I had never quitted Sincerity's onward way.—Have I not, by deviating from it, challenged him to retaliate on me?—If he does, can I blame him for following the path I first led him into?—How mean shall I appear in his opinion!—and how little am I, at this moment, in my own!—Even if he should find me as kind to his passion as he should wish or require me, has he not a right to esteem it
nothing

nothing but dissimulation and deceit?—You led me into this labyrinth, Lucy; help to extricate me from it.—I know not what to say to you, I am so much confused, and so ashamed of myself!—Farewel.

HARRIET NICOLLS.



L E T T E R XXIV.

TO CHARLES HORTON, Esq.

THE last mark of your generosity and bounty so far exceeded both my hopes and expectations, that I am totally at a loss how to return my thanks to your father, and to you.—It is impossible to shew my gratitude as I could wish; and therefore must abstain from expressing those acknowledgments, which it is equally my duty and inclination to offer. I can only, then, in recompense for this unmerited goodness, give you the satisfaction of knowing, that I am happy to the extent of my wishes: that as your intentions were to reinstate my affairs, and to settle me in the world, I am now in the most agreeable situation, and indebted to you alone for it.

I have not written to you, sir, for a long time: but attribute that silence to my fear of being thought troublesome and importunate.—

Had

Had I acquainted you that I had settled my affairs, and was in a state of tranquillity with regard to my personal safety, yet, as you knew the interests of my heart, I should have indicated a want, that would have seemed a tax upon your good-nature, and have pressed you to the payment of it; therefore, sir, I did not acquaint you with my transactions. Indeed they were, till lately, but of little moment.

When I returned to London, after parting with you at R———, I settled my affairs as expeditiously as possible; and began to taste the sweets of independent freedom, which I had not known for so long a time before: as I corresponded with the dear girl who had possession of my heart during the course of my troubles, and had ever endeavoured to lessen them to her view: so now I did not indulge that joy which was the consequence of your bounty, and the alteration of my affairs. Instead of telling her the truth, I inspired her with hope, and desired to enliven her spirits, which were much depressed by our situation. She concealed as much from me on her part: she was silent on the disagreeable or mortifying accidents she met with, and only told me those things which she knew would please or comfort me. In this state we were when your last letter came to hand. Determined to keep her no longer in suspense, nor to remain unhappy myself by being absent from her, I set off for L—, and arrived there without any accident. Willing to know how matters stood before I rushed into her presence, I therefore went to an house where I was entirely unknown, and sent for an old school-fellow of mine who was settled in the town, for whom I had always retained a very great esteem,
and

and who was acquainted with our mutual affection. He came to me directly : ignorant who had sent for him, he could not contain his surprize when he saw me. I would not suffer him to indulge himself, but inquired if he knew any thing of the object of my wishes.

“ I do,” replied he, “ and am the confidant of one of her admirers.”

“ Admirers !”

“ Yes,” said he, “ I am really : but moderate your impatience, and you shall be informed of every circumstance that ever came to my knowledge. Your misfortunes have not been unknown here. The voice of fame has spoken loudly of the situation you have been in. This has, doubtless, created much sorrow and trouble in the bosom of your mistress. Her pretended friends have incessantly teased her about you. Her constancy and fortitude have prevented her falling a sacrifice to force : but every art has been practised, though without success, to alienate her affections from you. There was no better method, than inspiring her with a notion of your infidelity : but that, the regularity of your correspondence with her, rendered fruitless.—She treated every report that was purposely conveyed to her, concerning your change of sentiments, with sovereign contempt. They then gave hopes to some young fellows, who had been a long time wishing to have an opportunity of declaring their sentiments to her : they were put in opposition to you. Your shattered fortunes were represented to her in the most shocking light ; and the fair prospects that she would have from an union with any of your rivals,

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“ who were wealthy, were exaggerated. Nothing has shaken her fidelity. I have told Green, whom you well remember, when he has complained to me of the little progress he has made, that her heart was engaged. This he would not believe from me, and was resolved to have it from her own mouth. He was not long without that satisfaction. He found her alone one day, and pressed his suit to her. She rejected his civilities, as usual: he became more importunate.”

“ Sir,” said she, “ I have no doubt but you have heard from common report, which has made very free with my name, of my attachment to Mr. Williams: if that will not satisfy you, I here repeat it to you, that my heart is devoted to him. This, Sir, will put an end to your applications to me. I know how much I am subjected to the scandal and censures of the malicious; but the innocent has nothing to fear from them; they may serve to make me uneasy and unhappy, but they cannot hurt me. I have now opened myself to you; and presume you will never solicit me on this head again. I am indebted to you for the partiality you have shewn me: as a friend and acquaintance, I shall be always very glad to see you, but never upon any other score.”

“ I loved her the better,” said Green, “ for her honesty and ingenuity; but I never will torment her any more. You know Williams, and tell him that I wish him happy with her.”

“ She has shaken off all her lovers but one; who is an obstinate, despicable fool, and it is impossible to get rid of him. What she said concerning the reports of this scandalous place,
“ is

" is very true. People will talk, and they are
 " ill-natured: they amuse themselves, and they
 " make others wretched. It is the sport of the
 " Boys with the Frogs. She has suffered very
 " much by it, and you will see a great alteration
 " in her. You had better not go to her direct-
 " ly; you will surprize her too much, and
 " perhaps hurt her. I will first advertise her
 " of the approach of one she so little ex-
 " pects."

I approved his caution, and soon followed him to her house, and was directed to the parlour where she was. I cannot describe the mutual pleasure we both felt: but my joy was much damped by seeing her so pale and emaciated.—The glow of rapture that tinged her cheek, could not overcome that languid, wan appearance she made. My apprehensions for her health gave a pain to my heart, in the midst of our mutual endearments. She was not free from fears. My coming at night: the concern I was in at seeing her look so ill, had given me an air of despondence: my agitation at seeing her again: and her ignorance of my good fortune: all conspired to make her think, that there was a mystery in my coming to see her that foreboded no good. This made her unhappy. It gave a check to the pleasures she would otherwise have indulged.

" Harry," said she, " I am glad to see you ;
 " very glad : it is a great while since I saw you
 " before, and fear we shall be soon separated
 " again ; but I am so accustomed to misfortune,
 " that I dare not even form the hope of being
 " happy. When are we to part again ?"

The pearly tear stood in her suffused eye : I caught it ere it fell.

“ Never, my love ; never till that dissolution
“ which awaits us all.”

I pressed the dear, the faithful maid to my panting bosom : I explained my situation to her : I told her of your bounty, of your generosity : I told her that it was to you I was beholden for the pleasures I then enjoyed with her. I have been here near a week, and have the satisfaction of seeing the beloved of my heart regain her health and spirits every day. Her uncle, finding his opposition vain, hath consented to our being united. We enjoy that delight which a mutual confidence gives us : happy in a reciprocal affection, we wait but for Saturday to join our hands, and sanctify the union of our hearts. I am invited by several respectable inhabitants of a very large neighbouring town to settle among them. The physician of the place died lately. It is an offer that is very agreeable to us both. I promise myself much happiness ; and if any thing can increase it, it will be to see my benefactors come and enjoy part of those blessings they have procured for me. My Betsy, tho' unknown to you, joins in the wish. She most ardently desires to have an opportunity of thanking you. I consider the happiness that I enjoy, as your gift : and it is impossible to return the thanks that are your due. The greatest gratification that you can receive is, to be assured that your goodness is not misplaced or abused. That you may be ever happy, is the sincere wish of

HENRY WILLIAMS.

L. E. T.

LETTER XXV.

TO EDWARD SIMPSON, Esq.

I HAVE not been sufficiently collected to be able to write to you, my dear friend; and much question whether I am, at this moment, calm enough to tell you the cause of my agitation and uneasiness. Have I not cause enough, when all my hopes are blasted and overthrown? Convinced that Harriet has her favourites, and that I have no chance left me to gain her heart, I must fly from her: I cannot see without loving; and, what is worse, cannot avoid telling her of it. Webster, whom I have mentioned to you before, came here some evenings ago. I looked upon him with a suspicious eye; yet those suspicions were not confirmed, and I had reason to suppose, that she received him only as a friend, and the brother of her companion. But the veil is removed: she kindly threw aside her reserve, and informed me of the situation of her heart. "Harriet, it was not kind to triumph over me so publicly, and increase my torment, by exposing me to the insulting pity of a detested rival." He came here to pay his compliments, as he pretended, to the family at Elwood. What a reception did he meet with! He was scarcely arrived, when she flew, with an impatient ardour, to meet him. Joy danced in her eyes: rapture revelled in her countenance: her address bespoke the satisfaction she felt at seeing him. She had

shaken off that timidity and coldness that her language ever wore to me. She was animated with a pleasure she could not disguise. What were my emotions at that moment! The deadly dagger of jealousy was struck to my heart, a paleness spread over my countenance, and a cold sweat stood on my brow. I felt inexpressible anguish. She saw my situation, and shame alone checked her for a moment. However, she soon recovered herself. I followed their steps. She preserved her regard for him: her eye gazed on him with fondness, and she listened to him with delight. If she was lovely, when, averse to my passion, she scarcely condescended to look on me; how charming, when, softened by affection and tenderness, she discovered attractions, bewitching attractions, every moment. I read those glances of heart-felt satisfaction that passed between them, and wished for the fabled eye of the basilisk to destroy them both: but I concealed my rage, and, under the appearance of politeness and attention to Mr. Webster, remained with them all the evening, nor ever gave them an opportunity of indulging a private conversation. I am ashamed of myself. But could I permit them to be happy, and remain miserable myself? He departed at last: and shall I confess to you, that it was a most sensible pleasure to me when I saw him take his leave. In a state little short of madness, my behaviour was too conspicuous to remain unnoticed: I therefore retired to my chamber as early as possible. Rest fled me. Since that hour, Simpson, I have been most wretched: an end is put to all my hopes, and I must now give her up. What right have I to disturb her peace? It is evident she loves another:

ther: and why should I hinder her possessing him? I am very little at home, and have resolved to be still less so. Because I love her, if she cannot return that passion; am I to endeavour to make her miserable? Far be the ungenerous thought from me: though she has wound herself so closely about my heart, that, to tear her away, will nearly destroy me. I cannot patiently see her bestow that hand upon another, that I would receive with so much joy: I cannot insensibly behold her bestow those affections on another, that I wished so ardently to engross myself: but, instead of interrupting her happiness, I will forward it, if I can. Webster was here again last night: I did not come in till a little before his departure; and did not perceive, in their faces, that air of tranquillity or satisfaction so visible the preceding night. On the contrary, I thought Harriet treated him rather shily. She had all that indifference about her, that I had been so accustomed to meet with. This surprised me. "There may have been a quarrel between them," said I to myself. I watched them; and found nothing of anger subsisted between them;—at least none was expressed: Webster seemed not less astonished than myself. Every attempt he made to regain her ear, or attract her eye, was repulsed with a contemptuous coolness, that soon determined him to take his leave. After he went away, she sometimes turned her eyes on me. If I understood their language, and it is a science I have been endeavouring all my life to learn, they seemed to accuse me.—In what have I offended now?—I had determined to do every thing in my power to hasten their felicity; and resolved to forego every advantage my situa-

tion might have given me to plead my suit, and to trouble her no more. But there seems a mystery in this behaviour that must be explained, before I put those resolutions in practice. I will hear her tell me that she prefers Mr. Webster to any other man; and then will acquaint her with my intentions of serving her to the extent of my power, and assure her, that I had rather see her happy without me, than wretched with me. I shall gain her esteem, if I cannot inspire her with love.—I see her from my window. Enchanting girl! Could you but see with what grace and dignity she moves, you would not blame me for loving her. She is alone, and going towards the Hermitage. I will be soon with you, Harriet. The conclusion of this letter will inform you of what happens.

All the materials are the same

Of beauty and desire:

In a fair woman's goodly frame

No brightness is without a flame,

No flame without a fire.

Simpson, I cannot tell whether I shall have patience or composure enough to finish this epistle intelligibly; but as you have a good head, and can decypher well, you will have occasion to make use of your skill and experience in the latter, to read what I am defective in. I left your conversation, to follow the lovely Harriet into the garden: She had hardly seated herself in the Hermitage, before I, who had taken another road to it, appeared before her. Her head was turned from me.

“Heigh ho!”

“I am

" I am very sorry, Miss Nicolls, to hear
" you sigh; and am more sorry for the occa-
" sion."

She turned to me hastily, and seemed surpris-
ed; but did not appear angry.

" I have sufficient occasion, Sir," said she."

" It breaks my heart to see you unhappy: I
" have been the cause of some trouble to you,
" and have teased you with my addresses, which,
" I plainly perceive, are disagreeable to you;
" but I will no longer offend you, and am come
" to endeavour to make you amends. Though
" you will not admit me your lover, you shall
" not prevent my being your friend. I can easily
" see to whom you dedicate those affections, that
" I would willingly die to possess. Instead of
" interrupting your happiness, I will do every
" thing in my power to forward it. I would
" advise you not to delay it, and will reconcile
" my father to it. You are your own mistress,
" and are not accountable to any other person
" for your actions. Let me have the pleasure of
" knowing that you are happy, though I can in
" no other manner contribute to the making you
" so."

I had seated myself by her, and had taken her
hand between mine as I addressed her. She
made no attempt to withdraw it: it remained
a willing prisoner with me. I never had been so
much favoured by her before, and knew not what
to think of it. Her hat covered her face, so that,
by holding down her head, I could not get a
glimpse of it. Her hand trembled as I pressed it
while I spoke to her.

" I don't

" I don't understand you, Mr. Horton; and assure you, I don't know what you mean."

" I mean nothing but to make you happy; to remove every impediment, that may stand between you and the object of your wishes. He, I have no doubt, is deserving your esteem. May you be as truly blest as you ought to be! but I cannot help saying, that I shall envy Mr. Webster the possession of the too lovely Harriet Nicolls."

" Mr. Webster!" said she, raising up her eyes, her face crimsoned over with a blush that heightened her beauty.

" Perhaps I may be mistaken, madam."

" You are indeed," said she. " I never thought of Mr. Webster but as a friend, but as the brother of the only companion of my own sex I ever had. We have been companions too since we were children, which is the cause of our intimacy. I never thought of Mr. Webster in any other light."

This unexpected and agreeable confession removed a mountain from my shoulders: my astonishment scarce permitted me to press her hand to my quivering lips. My heart throbbed with ecstasy. " Blessings, ten thousand blessings on thee, dear, generous girl! What have you said! Webster is not the man whom you love."

" I have told you already in what degree of esteem I hold him."

" You have: but my transport has carried me beyond the bounds of discretion, and from the cool, the disinterested friend, I relapse into the joyful, ardent lover. I must assume the character that more properly belongs to me:

" I came

" I came here to endeavour to make you happy,
" thinking you had fixed your affections on Mr.
" Webster : I came to propose and promote your
" union with him. If he is not the man, may I
" presume to ask you, who is ? nothing but my
" desire to serve you, could make me so imper-
" tinent. I shall say nothing for myself : It is
" left to me to despair." She remained silent.
" Let not your timidity, amiable Harriet, pre-
" vent your acquainting me with the secret of
" your heart. I never had a right in it to relin-
" quish, or I would cease to urge it in competi-
" tion with your welfare. You shall have no
" cause to complain of me."

" Do not press me, Sir ; it is a discovery I
" ought not to make. Had it not been my
" own fault, I had not been reduced to this per-
" plexity."

I imagined she might have cast her eyes upon
somebody whom she was ashamed to acknow-
ledge ; and told her, that her esteem would make
any one happy and noble. I alluded to an infe-
riority of situation ; and was proceeding to tell
her that our passions were involuntary. She stop-
ped me.

" I am now necessitated to defend myself, Mr.
" Horton ; and ought to be ashamed indeed of
" indulging my presumptuous hopes : but I will
" tell you my misfortunes,—and am sure you
" will pity rather than take advantage of them."

(My blood ran cold, Simpson: I gazed on her
with a wildness and eagerness that terrified her)

" I am a dependant on your father : he has been
" a parent to me : I am entertained as his relati-
" on, but have great reason to believe that I am
" not at all related to him. My hours were
" spent

“ spent in peace, and my days in happiness, till
“ your arrival here: Your solicitations first
“ caused my troubles: your present suspicions
“ increase them: I am culpable; but—”

She could go no farther. She hid her face in her handkerchief.

“ What?” said I hastily. “ For heaven’s
“ sake, explain yourself.”

“ I have done nothing to forfeit your good
“ opinion, which I own I wish to deserve.”

“ You treated Mr. Webster in such a man-
“ ner,” said I, “ as shewed you did not disdain
“ to be thought well of by him. Ah, Harriet,
“ Harriet, whence proceeded that encourage-
“ ment you gave him?”

“ From a meanness and dissimulation I am
“ ashamed of. Every crime carries its punish-
“ ment along with it, and I am now expiating
“ my offence against truth. That has forced me
“ to this interview, to clear myself in your opi-
“ nion: that has made me reveal what I wish
“ heartily had never been uttered. But, Sir,
“ you are a man of honour, and you must detest
“ me in consequence of my deceiving you. I
“ could not suffer myself to be lost in your opi-
“ nion, though I suppose I shall not be found
“ worthy of your affection.”

“ You are most worthy of it,” said I, pres-
“ sing her to my transported heart. “ Your inge-
“ nuousness and sincerity cancel the remembrance
“ of every thing that is passed. To you, and
“ you alone, my days, my hours shall be devoted.
“ Mistress of my heart and affections, thy
“ pleasure shall be the study of my life. Blessed
“ dissimulation, that has procured me so delight-
“ ful an explanation of it! and, severe as the
“ torments

"torments were I have felt in consequence of it,
"they are all now forgotten, and their remem-
"brance is even pleasing to me."

"I can support this no longer," said she;
"Let me retire: I fear I have gone too far. Oh!
"Mr. Horton, do not despise my weakness."

"You do not know my heart, my dearest
"girl, to suppose me capable of such a folly, as
"to reject that which alone can make me hap-
"py."

"I hope you will not; but let me go."

"Will you meet me here to-morrow."

"I will."

Never did I pass an evening of such sweet content. The beauty of the lovely maid was heightened by the blush of charming confusion that animated her. But she preserves a dignity and grace that are inexpressible. She sinks not under that confession of her sentiments, that so few of her sex can properly sustain. She knows, and is sensible of the power of virtue and innocence; and is not ashamed of acknowledging a partiality in favour of a man whom she thinks is deserving her. She has no reason to blush at the discovery of sentiments dictated by honour and affection. It is late, Simpson: I must go to bed, and dream of her. Farewel for this night.

The night has been employed in thinking of her. Her dear idea employed my thoughts when I was awake, and she returned to my dreams when I slept: I have seen her this morning. How lovely does she appear to me! Her eyes no longer retain that fastidious pride, or chilling indifference, which they were accustomed to treat me with. No: they shine like the genial sun in spring, and joy and transport are inspired by their rays.

rays. She seems to be more at ease than formerly: has less restraint when I am present, and therefore discovers new charms. The veil is laid aside; and her beauty is more ravishing, for being so long a time hid and obscured from my sight. I hear her at her harpsichord: I fly to attend her. Envy me the happiness I shall enjoy. Every note will be tuned to love and rapture, and her harmonious voice shall be modulated but to give me delight. I will return the happiness I receive: why am I delaying it, by continuing to write to you? will you not be happy, in knowing that I am so? convinced that, though in love, I am not insensible to the calls of friendship. With me joy then, my dear Simpson. Can there be a greater cause for congratulation, than being possessed of the heart, and esteem of one of the loveliest of her sex? I can stay no longer: she begins to sing a favourite air. Once more, farewell.

Yours truly,

CHARLES HORTON.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

